

An evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

January 2025

Lois Beech, Consultancy and Partnerships Manager
Cicily Biju, Senior Data Analyst, &
Hannah Wix, Research Officer

Housing Learning and Improvement Network



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1. Executive Summary

- 1.01 In England, concerns around the increasing costs of living and heating during winter 2022 to 2023 saw the emergence of local interventions to establish Warm Spaces.
- 1.02 Clarion Futures', the charitable arm of Clarion Housing, Warm Space programme saw Clarion Housing's owned and non-owned community centres/spaces, known to Clarion Housing as 'community and associated assets', receive funding to provide a Warm Space offer to local people. Community and associated assets tend to be provided in areas with a higher concentration of Clarion Housing residents, but the Warm Spaces are open to the whole community.
- 1.03 Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces aim to bring people together without any stigma attached, enabling conversations and friendships to grow organically, usually over a bowl of soup or a cup of tea. Partners have been signposting to sources of advice and support on issues such as housing, health, education, money management, benefits, digital skills and access to foodbanks.
- 1.04 From October 2022 to May 2023, Clarion Futures used its own funding to deliver the Warm Space programme, awarding 28 Warm Spaces grants worth £166,442.24 in total. Across the 28 Warm Spaces there was an estimated overall footfall of c.10,000 people, with an estimated 1,069 individual visits.
- 1.05 In autumn 2023, Clarion Futures received additional funding from the Rothesay Foundation to continue the Warm Space programme, and introduce the provision of 'Warm Packs', free items to keep people warm and to help people save money.
- 1.06 Between October 2023 and April 2024, 53 Warm Spaces were awarded grants worth c.£478,000 (with Clarion Futures awarding c.£160,000 worth of grants and the Rothesay Foundation c.£318,000), 24 warm spaces returned from the previous year. In addition, 1,167 Warm Packs were distributed with a total spend of £117,337.72. During these 7 months, there was an estimated overall footfall of 43,691 people, with an estimated 4,836 individual visits. A significant increase from the year before.
- 1.07 Clarion Futures have not spent all the funds for 2023/24 but the agreement between the Rothesay Foundation and Clarion Futures has been to continue to keep open some of the warm spaces over the summer and reallocate the remaining c.£40,000 across to next year.

Table 1. Warm Space footfall and estimated unique visitors for October 2022 to May 23 (8 months) and October 2023 to April 2024 (7 months).

Time period	No. of Warm Spaces	Footfall across the Warm Spaces	Estimated no. of unique visits
October 2022 to May 2023 (8 months)	28	10,000	1,069

October 2023 to April 2024 (7 months)	53	43,691	4,836
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- 1.08 Clarion Futures commissioned the Housing Learning & Improvement Network (LIN) to conduct an evaluation of the Warm Space programme, including the distribution of Warm Packs which had three aims:
- To evaluate the service's operational components, highlighting areas for enhancement and improvement.
 - To evaluate the effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community.
 - To evaluate the social and financial impacts of the Warm Space programme.
- 1.09 The Housing LIN visited 10 Warm Spaces across the UK and conducted a survey, interviews and focus groups with Warm Space visitors. As well as engaging with Clarion Futures internal staff and Warm Space partners and volunteers.

The Warm Space programme's operational components

Lessons learned from the Warm Spaces

- 1.10 The evaluation of the Warm Space programme indicates that it is effectively supporting the community and is highly valued by visitors, staff and partners. All respondents in the partner survey expressed a desire to participate again, highlighting strong support for the initiative.
- 1.11 The programme's success is attributed to the skills and local knowledge of Clarion Futures staff and partners, allowing for the Warm Space to adapt to community needs. Additionally, it has strengthened partners skills in completing grant applications.
- 1.12 Clarion Futures has successfully delivered 53 Warm Spaces, benefiting from pre-existing grant processes and quick mobilisation. However, challenges include, potentially limited impact of £5,000 grants, difficulties for visitors travelling in cold weather, managing complex needs of Warm Space visitors, and increased workload for staff. In addition, there is a concern that partners have limited capacity and challenges around volunteer recruitment could hinder the programme's future.
- 1.13 Despite these challenges, the evaluation indicated that there is scope for the Warm Space programme to provide a year-round offering potentially rebranding as a 'Wellbeing Space'. Should this become part of Clarion Futures' official offer there is scope for employing a dedicated officer to manage the programme.

Lessons learned from the Warm Packs

- 1.14 The evaluation indicates that Warm Packs significantly benefit the Warm Space programme, providing items that support people to save money and keep warm. Clarion Futures staff have worked hard to deliver this aspect of the programme despite administrative challenges.
- 1.15 Administrative challenges included time consuming data reporting and ordering processes. There were also practical challenges for the Warm Space partners, including issues with storage and transporting items to visitors. In addition, there were challenges in communicating the Warm Pack offering effectively to Warm Space partners.
- 1.16 To improve the Warm Pack offer it is recommended that Clarion Futures consider how they can reduce administrative burdens for partners, as well as with storage issues, potentially by sending items directly to visitor. Rebranding the Warm Packs would help visitors to understand they can select individual items if they wish to.
- 1.17 The evaluation also indicated that sleeping bags and children's items would be useful for visitors.

The effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community

- 1.18 The evaluation of the Warm Space programme indicated that it was effective in providing support to people in the community, particularly in relation to social support.
- 1.19 The Warm Spaces saw a significant increase in footfall between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Between October 2023 and April 2024 footfall reached 43,691 visits across 53 Warm Spaces, with an estimated 4,836 unique visits. An increase from a footfall of c.10,000 the year before with an estimated 1,069 unique visits across the 8 months it was open.
- 1.20 Many assets involved in the programme reported a 25-50% increase in footfall and new visitors. The funding enabled many assets to offer additional services. Most assets also reported an improved reputation in the community, and some have seen an increase in volunteer numbers.
- 1.21 The profile of people attending Warm Spaces tends to be people over the age of 55, however, some Warm Spaces are primarily focused on supporting young people. Warm Spaces predominantly provide support to 'vulnerable' people in the community.
- 1.22 The evaluation indicated that visitors attend the Warm Spaces regularly with most attending weekly or multiple times a week. The repeated use of the Warm Spaces amongst visitors demonstrates how much the Warm Spaces are valued as visitors keep returning. The qualitative research highlighted that visitors return to Warm

Spaces because they consider Warm Spaces to be safe, non-judgmental and inclusive spaces where they feel well supported. One visitor, who had severe Parkinsons, noted that *"I've never felt welcome going to other groups, but I love it here!"*

- 1.23 The effectiveness of Warm Spaces in providing social support is well evidenced. The visitor survey indicated that 77% of attendees use Warm Spaces to socialise, indicating the success of companionship and conversation services provided by 94% of Warm Spaces.
- 1.24 Warm Spaces also sought to provide warmth over the winter months. 50% of visitors report that they like that the Warm Space provides somewhere warm for them to be. This suggests that for at least half of visitors, the Warm Spaces are supporting them to keep warm during the winter months.

The social and financial impacts of the Warm Space programme

- 1.25 The evaluation of the Warm Space programme identified a variety of social and financial benefits for visitors.

Social Impacts

- 1.26 The evidence from the evaluation indicates that the Warm Spaces (and the distribution of Warm Packs) have had a variety of social impacts for visitors:
- Reduced loneliness/isolation – from socialising with others.
 - Improved mental health – from access to support services and a supportive environment provided by staff and other visitors.
 - Increased resilience – from an increased sense of purpose and improved outlook on life.
 - Improved childhood development – by offering opportunities for children to socialise with a range of ages.
 - Increased physical health – by providing somewhere warm to by outside the home and by providing warmth in the home.
 - Improved healthy eating – by encouraging healthy eating and reducing the number of people skipping meals.
- 1.27 *'Attending the Warm Space gives me a will to live'* – Warm Space visitor
- 1.28 *'Having the electric blanket has helped alleviate my chronic pain'* – receiver of a Warm Pack

Financial impacts

- 1.29 The evidence from the evaluation indicates the Warm Space programme is providing financial benefits and reducing the burden of the cost of living for many participants in the following ways:
- Saving money on food costs – due to the availability of free food/refreshments and food budgeting advice.
 - Saving money on energy bills – due to avoided energy use at home and via the Warm Pack items
 - Saving money on other items – due to the free Warm Pack items
 - Signposting to financial services – supporting people to maximise their budgets and benefits advice.
 - Saving money on children's activities – providing a free space for children's activities.
- 1.30 *'The Warm Space has provided when finances have run low, and my cupboards are bare'*
– Warm Space visitor
- 1.31 *'The Warm Packs came at a time when heating was expensive and had increased. It was a moment of relief to have help'* - receiver of a Warm Pack

Summary

- 1.32 The evidence from the evaluation is that Clarion Futures Warm Space programme has been working well and offers significant benefits to the local community. Whilst the Warm Spaces do support visitors with the cost-of-living crisis and heating costs, it was the social benefits to visitors that shone through the evaluation. Offering visitors the opportunity to socialise in a welcoming environment significantly improves wellbeing as it reduces social isolation, loneliness and improves mental health. This suggests there is scope to continue the Warm Space programme as part of Clarion Futures' core offer not only in winter months, with potential to rebrand to 'Wellbeing Spaces' to take account of the wellbeing benefits provided to visitors.

2. Introduction and background

- 2.01 This is an evaluation report from the Housing Learning & Improvement Network (LIN) based on an initial brief and follow up discussion with Clare Rennison at Clarion Futures, the charitable foundation of Clarion Housing Group, in December 2023.
- 2.02 The Clarion Futures community assets team has been running a Warm Spaces programme across the UK which is now in its second year. The Warm Spaces programme utilises Clarion Futures' 45 community assets, as well as several associated assets that are not Clarion Housing owned. The programme has enabled these spaces to access funding during the cost-of-living crisis to maintain running costs and act as warm hubs for the local community. Clarion Futures have received funding from the Rothesay Foundation to set up these Warm Spaces as well as providing internal funding.
- 2.03 In addition, community and associated asset partners have access to 'Warm Packs' which it can distribute to local people that might need products to support them to keep warm at home.
- 2.04 Clarion Futures conducted a relatively 'light-touch' evaluation in previous years that details the amount of people using the Warm Space. This report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of the Warm Space programme and access to Warm Packs for a range of stakeholders, i.e. those that use the Warm Space, the community assets, Clarion Housing Group, and wider community impacts.
- 2.05 This evaluation seeks to quantify the amount of people being supported by the Warm Space programme and with Warm Packs but also the associated benefits, across all ages.
- 2.06 The main aims of evaluation are:
1. *To evaluate the service's operational components, highlighting areas for enhancement and improvement.*
 2. *To evaluate the effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community, for the following age groups <55, 55-65 and 65+.*
 3. *To evaluate the social and financial impacts of the Warm Space programme.*
- 2.07 The intention of this evaluation to identify the lessons learned and provide evidence for the case for continued funding.

3. Methodology

- 3.01 The purpose of this section is to explain the methodology used to address the three evaluation aims. The three aims of this evaluation are:
1. *To evaluate the service's operational components, highlighting areas for enhancement and improvement.*
 2. *To evaluate the effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community, for the following age groups <55, 55-65 and 65+.*
 3. *To evaluate the social and financial impact of the Warm Space programme.*
- 3.02 Following a review of evaluation frameworks used to measure the success of Warm Spaces, a mixed method evaluation approach was used to address the aims of the evaluation using quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools.
- 3.03 The Housing LIN developed evaluation tools in collaboration with the Clarion Futures Communities Team.
- 3.04 To address these research questions, the Housing LIN team engaged with the following stakeholders:
- Clarion Futures internal staff
 - Warm Space partners (and volunteers)
 - Warm Space visitors
- 3.05 To address research question 1, Housing LIN staff engaged with members of Clarion Futures internal staff who work on the Warm Spaces programme. This information was supplemented with findings from engagement with Warm Space partner staff. The outcomes of this research are presented in section 3 in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of both the Warm Spaces and Packs).
- 3.06 To address this question, the Housing LIN met with the following members of the Clarion Futures team via Teams:
- Clare Rennison, Communities Manager (Community Assets & Placemaking)
 - Ciara Britton-Smith, Communities Project Assistant (Community Assets)
 - Michelle Parry, Communities Officer (Community Assets)
 - Sarah Manley, Communities Officer (Community Assets)
 - Emma Hale, Grants Manager
 - Imogen Pearce, Grants Officer
 - Denise Barnes, Communities Officer (London North Regional Team)
 - Jane Haskins, Communities Officer (South Regional Team)
 - Matt Parsonage, Head of Communities

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3.07 To address research question 2 and 3, the Housing LIN carried out engagement work at 10 Warm Spaces, 9 in person and 1 online. The Warm Spaces selected enabled the Housing LIN to visit Warm Spaces with a good geographic spread and with a range of ages in attendance.

3.08 At the site visits, the Housing LIN carried out observations, interviews, focus groups and handed out surveys to Warm Space partners and visitors. The aim was to get a first-hand experience of the Warm Spaces to understand how effective they are in providing support and to learn about the potential social and financial benefits.

3.09 The following table identifies the Warm Spaces the Housing LIN attended.

Table 2. Warm Spaces visited as part of the evaluation

Warm Space visited	Location	No of Warm Space visitors
1. Phillimore Community Centre, (Communities 1st)	Radlett	<i>5 visitors</i>
2. William Sutton Memorial Hall, (Colebrook SW Ltd)	Plymouth	<i>10-12 visitors</i>
3. The Sutton Centre, (The Sutton Centre)	Bradford	<i>10-15 visitors</i>
4. Queen Adelaide Community Centre, (Play Place Innov8 CIC)	Penge	<i>2 parents, 5 children</i>
5. ROYALS Youth Centre, (ROYALS Youth Centre)	Rainham	<i>30-50 visitors</i>
6. Riverside Centre, (Riverside Community Centre)	Carshalton	<i>15 visitors to Stay and Play 15-20 visitors going to the clothes FreeCycle</i>
7. Priory Court Community Centre, (William Morris Big Local)	Walthamstow	<i>8 visitors</i>
8. The Cherry Tree Centre, (Mid Sussex Voluntary Action)	Burgess Hill	<i>5-10 visitors</i>
9. Methodist Church Hall, (Selsey Community Forum)	Selsey	<i>25-30 visitors</i>
10. Sutton Community Centre, (Bolton Wanderers in the Community)	Bolton (online meeting)	<i>1 staff member</i>

3.10 A paper survey was distributed to Warm Space partners and visitors at the site visits.

- 3.11 The survey received a response from 52 Warm Space visitors, and roughly the same number answered each question. 18 members of staff or volunteers completed the Warm Space partner survey.

Caveats and assumptions regarding the survey

- 3.12 According to the data, between October 2023 and April 2024, Clarion Futures funded 53 Warm Spaces. As part of the evaluation, Housing LIN visited 10 of these - one of which was an online discussion with a member of staff only. As a result, the findings may not be representative of the 53 Warm Spaces as a whole. Despite this, the results give valuable insight into the perspectives of Warm Space staff and visitors.
- 3.13 In addition, at some Warm Spaces, multiple staff members filled out a survey, whereas at others, it may have been only one staff member. This occurred because it was felt important that all staff members could have their say in the survey. As a result, some Warm Spaces will have a greater weighting than others in the interpretation of the results of the survey. The same is the case for the visitor surveys, where some Warm Spaces had many visitors who were keen to fill out the survey, and others less so.

4. Evaluation of the Warm Space programme's operational components

- 4.01 This part of the report provides an evaluation of the Warm Space programme's operational components, including the distribution of Warm Packs, highlighting areas for enhancement and improvement (research question 1).
- 4.02 This is provided as a 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' analysis of the Warm Space and Warm Packs to demonstrate what is working well about how the Warm Space programme is running and if there is a need for any improvements.
- 4.03 The evidence for this SWOT analysis has come from engagement with a range of stakeholders, including with Clarion Futures internal staff, Warm Space partners (community and associated asset), as well as people that use the Warm Spaces.

Warm Space SWOT

Strengths

- 4.04 Overall, the evidence from the evaluation is the operational processes are working well which means that the Warm Space programme is able to support people in the community and is considered valuable and essential by stakeholders.
- 4.05 All respondents in the Warm Space partner survey (100%) expressed a desire to be involved again if the Clarion Futures Warm Spaces programme runs next winter, indicating strong support and perceived value of the initiative.

Utilising existing community spaces and strengthening the offer of community and associated assets

- 4.06 A key strength of the Warm Space programme is that it utilises existing community spaces that are well known in the local community. The survey indicated that a significant majority (69%) have adapted an already running service to operate as a Warm Space. The evidence from some Warm Space visitors is that the Warm Space feels more accessible as it available in a space visitors know already.
- 4.07 The Warm Spaces programme is seen by Clarion Futures staff as strengthening the offer for the community assets, providing increased services and ways of supporting their local communities. In some cases, this helped to increase their activities, for example, at the Phillimore Community Centre.

Flexibility of the Warm Spaces to adapt to community needs

- 4.08 The evidence from the evaluation is that a key strength of the Warm Space programme is the ability of Warm Spaces to adapt to community needs. This is due to the skills and local intelligence of Clarion Futures internal staff involved and Warm Space partners

who know and understand their communities well. For example, the Warm Space in Yellow Brick Road associated asset in Andover for young people was experiencing low turnout in its existing location, it was identified by partners and Clarion Futures staff that a bus would be more effective at encouraging people to use the Warm Space.

- 4.09 Warm Space partners are given autonomy when it comes to the types of activities that they provide at the Warm Space, this is considered a key strength by partners and Clarion Futures staff as it means that the activities are well suited the local community. The learning from the site visits is that a flexible approach to the types of activities provided helps to increase the range of people that access the Warm Space.
- 4.10 Warm Space partners can also decide how often they run the Warm Space and for how many hours a week. Warm Spaces are awarded the same funding regardless of these factors. This means that Warm Space partners can run the programme in a way that addresses the needs of the local community. In communities that have a greater need for warmth, partners may want to run the space for longer in the winter. On the other hand, communities that benefit more from the social aspect may require spaces that run throughout the year but in shorter sessions.

Support for and working with Warm Space partners

- 4.11 Clarion Futures internal staff have observed the growth and development of Warm Space partners through the programme, particularly in relation to completing funding/grant applications. The conversations with Warm Space partners indicated that the Clarion Futures staff support has helped some Warm Space partners to upskill their grant application skills and acquire additional funding from elsewhere.
- 4.12 For example, in Rainham, having the Warm Space running with the Clarion Futures funding helped them to secure lottery funding. This is supported by the survey evidence which found that 58% of Warm Space have seen an increase in additional funding since becoming a Warm Space.

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Figure 1. Warm Space partner staff survey - Since becoming a Warm Space, have you seen an increase in your organisation's activities in any of the following areas? (Please tick all that apply)

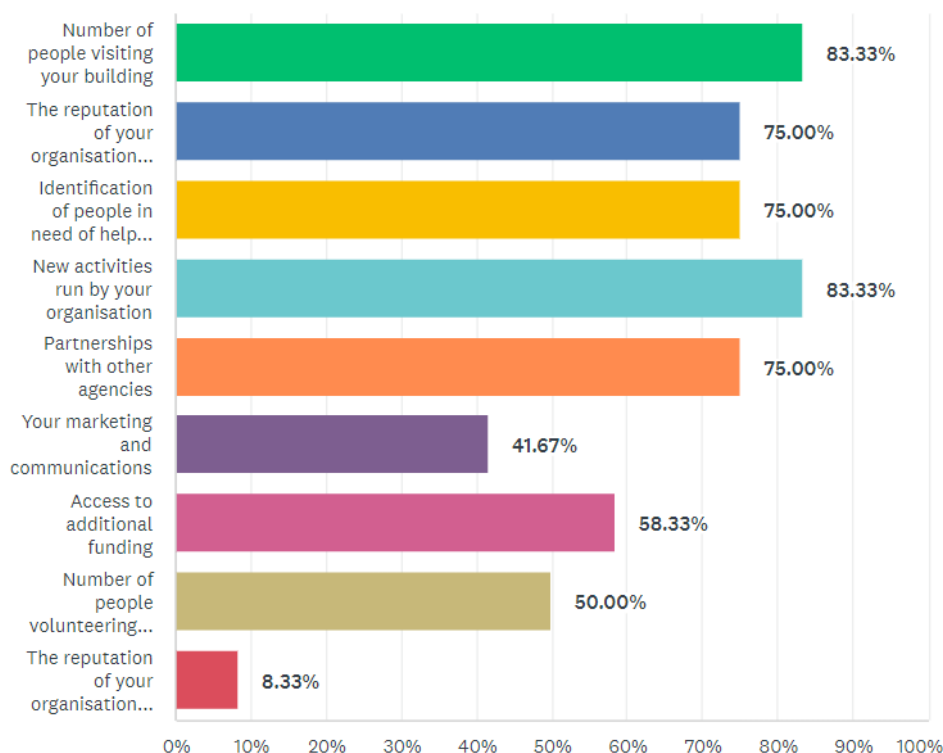


Figure 2. Full answer choices for figure above

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Number of people visiting your building	83.33% 10
The reputation of your organisation locally	75.00% 9
Identification of people in need of help and support in the area	75.00% 9
New activities run by your organisation	83.33% 10
Partnerships with other agencies	75.00% 9
Your marketing and communications	41.67% 5
Access to additional funding	58.33% 7
Number of people volunteering with your organisation	50.00% 6
The reputation of your organisation nationally	8.33% 1
Total Respondents: 12	

Marketing and terminology

- 4.13 The evidence from the evaluation is that the Clarion Futures staff consider the Warm Space terminology to effectively describe what the Warm Space consists of, and this helps staff and partners to understand its purpose.
- 4.14 The Warm Space programme has been well communicated with the wider Clarion Housing team/organisation. For example, at the Clarion Housing roadshow. This helped to raise awareness off the programme across Clarion Housing.

Warm Space Working Group and panel

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- 4.15 The evidence from the evaluation is that the Working Group is working well and has good representation across the different Clarion Futures teams. It was reported that the Working Group are committed to the Warm Space programme, and this has helped the programme succeed.
- 4.16 The evidence from the conversations with staff is that the monthly panel generally works well and is a chance to talk as a team about each Warm Space and whether to approve an application.

Improved team working across Clarion Housing

- 4.17 Clarion Futures staff have reported improved partnership working within Clarion Housing teams. Partnership working between different Clarion Housing teams means there is greater understanding of Clarion Housing structures and other programmes. Clarion Housing teams use the Warm Spaces as an opportunity to support tenants through advice and support sessions, which demonstrates this cross-team working in practice.

Benefits for internal staff

- 4.18 Crucially, Clarion Futures internal staff enjoy working on the Warm Spaces programme, with many seeing it as a valuable addition to their working life. Staff are pleased that the funding is having wide reaching benefits that support many groups in society.
- 4.19 It is generally viewed as manageable alongside the other tasks that individuals are working on.
- 4.20 Discussions with Clarion Futures staff suggests that the Warm Space programme can also offer learning opportunities for the Clarion Futures team, which might help in their personal and professional development.
- 4.21 Senior staff within the team appreciated having the autonomy to go in the direction they wanted to for the programme.
- 4.22 Staff appreciate having a say in how the funding is utilised. While Clarion Futures also fund the food banks of other charities, they value the autonomy and creative direction they have with this particular programme.

Commitment and support from Clarion Futures as an organisation

- 4.23 When reporting back to the Clarion Futures board, staff felt that they had the support of the board to develop the Warm Space programme.

Grants, funding and reviewing processes

- 4.24 The evidence from the grants team is that the Flexigrant system is working well to monitor the grants process and review whether the funding is spent how it was originally intended. This supports Clarion Futures to provide data to the Rothesay Foundation who require additional monitoring and reporting.

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- 4.25 The Warm Space grants can support Warm Space partners of all sizes – big or small. This is in contrast with some other Clarion Futures programmes, where there is an income cap of £500,000. Staff can direct the partners to the financial resilience programme if that feels appropriate, especially in the case of smaller Warm Space partners. The grants team will always try to award grants even if it is a more challenging process to do so (which can be the case with smaller Warm Space partners who may find the applications harder to manage).
- 4.26 A further strength of the Warm Spaces programme was that it provides the Clarion Futures grants team with valuable data.
- 4.27 It was felt that there is a good set up within the grants team, with the meetings having been well organised.

Programme efficiency

- 4.28 The evaluation found that the Warm Space programme was quick to mobilise. Clarion Futures internal staff indicated that this was because of staff knowing their Warm Space partners, and the appetite and ambition of partners themselves. In addition, the Warm Space terminology helped people understand what a Warm Space might consist of.
- 4.29 The evaluation highlights that onboarding processes are becoming more streamlined as the programme grows.

Weaknesses/Challenges

- 4.30 This section details some of the weaknesses of the programme. It should be noted that some of these weaknesses have been turned into opportunities with some further consideration from the Clarion Futures team. As the programme grows and develops, it is likely that some of the current challenges will naturally be ironed out.

Long 'onboarding' process for new Warm Space partners

- 4.31 The evaluation highlighted that whilst for the majority of Warm Space partners, the 'onboarding' process is quick, for some this has been longer. See 'Opportunity to streamline grant funding' below.

Managing Warm Space users that might have challenging behaviours

- 4.32 The evidence from the evaluation highlighted that a challenge for some Warm Spaces has been managing Warm Space visitors with complex needs, 30% of Warm Space partners in the survey reported this as a barrier to delivery in the survey. The conversations with partners indicated that visitors with complex needs can sometimes be disruptive.
- 4.33 The evidence suggests that developing a process for how to deal with this and understanding the safeguarding implications would be beneficial, for example, a list of emergency contacts, providing training for staff. Clarion Futures staff have noted that this will be worked on in time for next year.

How much the funding can help

- 4.34 One of the challenges raised was the extent to which a grant of £5,000 can have an impact on Warm Space partners and the community. Some staff suggested that the £5,000 wasn't enough to transform the service but does go some way towards helping partners to run services.
- 4.35 In general, Warm Space partners are using the funding for catering and paid staff more than energy support and usage. Staff may want to consider further the reasoning behind this.

Takes time to build a Warm Space/community around a Warm Space up

- 4.36 The discussions with staff suggested that some of the most successful Warm Spaces tend to be the ones that are already well-established community or associated assets which has meant that it has taken time to build a Warm Space in less established assets. However, Clarion Futures have done well to make Warm Spaces work in these areas.

Managing applications

- 4.37 A challenge throughout the programme was the large number of applications to become a Warm Space, which took the panel a while to consider. Whilst the grant process has improved as the programme has matured, a significant amount of time was required to process grants and this process required a lot of planning and behind the scenes work, such as checking eligibility and due diligence.

Practical challenges for visitors/potential visitors

- 4.38 Clarion Futures staff suggested that a barrier to using the Warm Space amongst some older people is leaving their homes in colder weather. Whilst the Warm Space might provide somewhere 'warm', the journey to a Warm Space can be off-putting, particularly when it is dark earlier. Despite this, the Warm Space is attracting an older age-cohort to attend.
- 4.39 The lack of provision of Warm Space services works well for people that are not working, but there is a potentially missed cohort of people that might benefit from the services but work during the day.

Purpose of the panel

- 4.40 The evaluation highlighted that one of the challenges of the programme occurs at the panel stage. The purpose of the panel is to approve and decline a Warm Space application. Before getting to the panel, an application has already been vetted by the Grants and Community Assets teams which is meant to speed up the panel process. However, panel meetings can be quite lengthy as panel members still question why an application had come through even though it has been vetted previously. Some staff noted that there was initially some conflict within the Warm Space panel due to this.
- 4.41 Clarion Futures staff are seeking improved communication about the purpose of the panel to make the meetings more efficient.

Some confusion around what a Warm Space is

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- 4.42 The evaluation has highlighted that a minority of Warm Space partners aren't clear what their remit is as a Warm Space, they are seeking more information about what activities count as 'Warm Space activities'.

Increased Clarion Futures internal staff workload

- 4.43 The evidence suggested that a lack of capacity can be an issue for Clarion Futures internal staff who found it challenging to balance alongside their other roles and responsibilities, particularly given that Clarion Futures were going through an audit at the same time. However, it is considered that as the Warm Space programme matures the processes will become more efficient.
- 4.44 Overall, the Warm Spaces programme is considered by staff as a rewarding use of their time despite these challenges.

Communications

- 4.45 Although there were some examples of the Warm Space programme being publicised across Clarion Housing, for example in the roadshow, it was also felt by some Clarion Futures staff that the Warm Space's programme could be publicised more widely, particularly given the significant footfall of the programme.
- 4.46 Staff consider that there is a need to better communicate the successes of the Warm Space programme on a national level.

Opportunities

Rewarding partners to recognise effort and build momentum

- 4.47 The evaluation highlighted that Warm Space partners are small organisations that give a lot to the programme. There is a potential opportunity for Clarion Futures to recognise and reward the efforts of Warm Space partners to keep the programme going and support their communities.
- 4.48 Suggestions included an award ceremony or physical awards that would celebrate partners and showcase the work of the Warm Spaces. It may also help maintain momentum and commitment to the Warm Space programme if people feel valued and motivated.

Opportunity to streamline grant funding

- 4.49 Clarion Futures currently provide multiple funding opportunities, such as the cost-of-living and digital funding, that community and associated assets can apply for. The evaluation indicated that having multiple funding streams can be an administrative burden for assets. Conversations with staff suggests synthesising these into one funding stream would help more people to apply for funding.
- 4.50 Clarion Futures staff were keen to start the Warm Space programme set up earlier for 2024/25 so that Warm Spaces are set up and ready to go for when they are needed by the community. Staff note that this year, delays in funding meant that some partners struggled to open in time.

Strengthening the Warm Space Working Group

- 4.51 Overall, the Working Groups is working well. However, there is potential to strengthen the group in a variety of ways.
- 4.52 The evidence indicates that the Working Group might benefit from representation from wider Clarion Housing teams, for example from those in housing. In addition, evidence suggests that the group should continue to ensure that Communities Officers and the Money and Digital team are represented. This would help to build further partnerships across the team and highlight ways the programme can support other Clarion Futures activity.
- 4.53 It was also suggested that rotational membership of the working group may be beneficial to get a range of perspectives. It may be helpful to have a range of perspectives from people in hands-on, as well as oversight, roles.
- 4.54 There is some confusion between the responsibilities of the Working Group and the panel. It is understood that the Warm Space Working Group is made up of a group of Clarion Futures internal staff that acts as a steering group for the programme whereas the Warm Space panel is where decisions are made over which Warm Spaces have been successful with funding. There is scope to explain this more clearly to staff.

Demonstrating the impact that Warm Spaces have to better enhance Clarion Housing's reputation

- 4.55 The evidence suggests that there is scope to be more upfront about Clarion Housing's role in the Warm Space programme, some participants weren't aware that Clarion Housing had funded the assets. Demonstrating the impact the Warm Spaces have on individuals' lives has the potential to strengthen Clarion Housing's reputation within the local community.
- 4.56 However, the evaluation evidence highlights that this needs to be done sensitively to avoid accusations of virtue signalling. It is important to place the work that the community is doing first and foremost, rather than overemphasising the role of Clarion Housing in these Warm Spaces.

Engaging with other local community groups

- 4.57 There is scope to build relationships with other local community groups to understand what else is on offer for the community and tailor the services accordingly.

New Clarion Futures staff member dedicated to Warm Space administration

- 4.58 The role of Communities Project Assistant (Community Assets Team) was highly valuable for managing the Warm Space admin and workload. However, the evaluation suggests that the programme is now large enough to require a dedicated staff member, a Warm Space Project Coordinator.

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- 4.59 This member of staff would be responsible for coordinating the Warm Space activities, administration, data monitoring and support for the Warm Spaces. As well as leading on the potential to streamlining funding.
- 4.60 The weaknesses identified that communication with Warm Space partners can be an issue, having a dedicated staff member for this would help. Phone calls are suggested to be more effective than email correspondence when engaging with partners, but existing staff don't have time for this.
- 4.61 A new member of staff would also be needed if Clarion Futures were to order Warm Packs direct to visitors. This would require a significant amount of data collection and time.
- 4.62 Based on the discussions, the salary for this post would be c.£30,000-£40,000 pa.
- 4.63 This role would help to build relationships with community and associated assets and support them with transitions between funding opportunities. i.e. what is the impact for the community asset when the Warm Space funding stops.

Marketing Warm Spaces

- 4.64 The evidence suggests that 'Warm Space' might benefit from being rebranded to 'Wellbeing Space'. Some Warm Space partner staff felt that 'Warm Space' can feel heavily stigmatising, especially in more economically deprived areas.
- 4.65 The evidence from the Warm Space visits suggests that whether partners use the Warm Space terminology varies from one location to another. Some partners refer to 'Living Rooms' or 'Wellbeing Hubs'.
- 4.66 In relation to how the Warm Spaces are marketed, the Warm Space partner survey highlighted that partners are using a range of techniques to publicise the Warm Spaces, including online and offline methods.
- 4.67 However, the survey with Warm Space visitors indicates that whilst partners are advertising online (76% are using social media and 65% are using their websites), many of Warm Space visitors (50%) learn about the Warm Space through word of mouth with only a minority finding out about it online (12%). This suggests that word of mouth is the more effective marketing tool.
- 4.68 However, the qualitative research suggests that using a range of marketing techniques can help to attract a diverse range of ages.

Figure 3. Warm Space partner survey - How do you advertise your Warm Space? (tick all that apply)

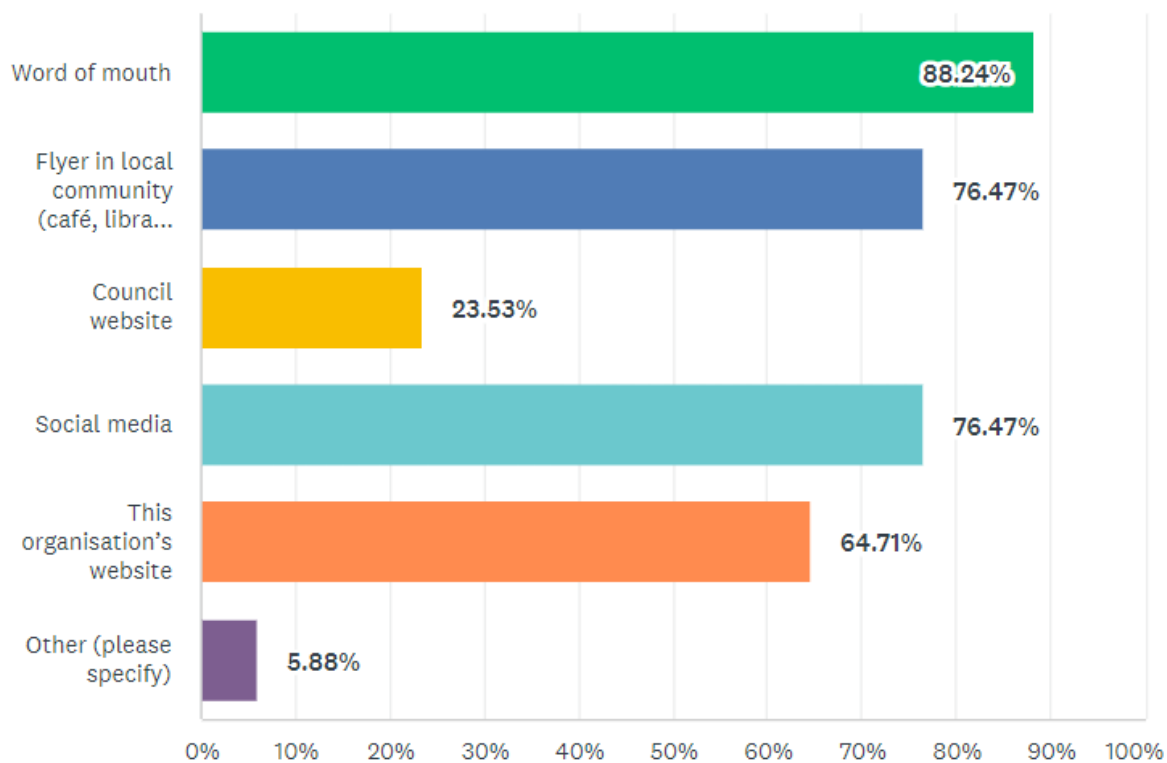
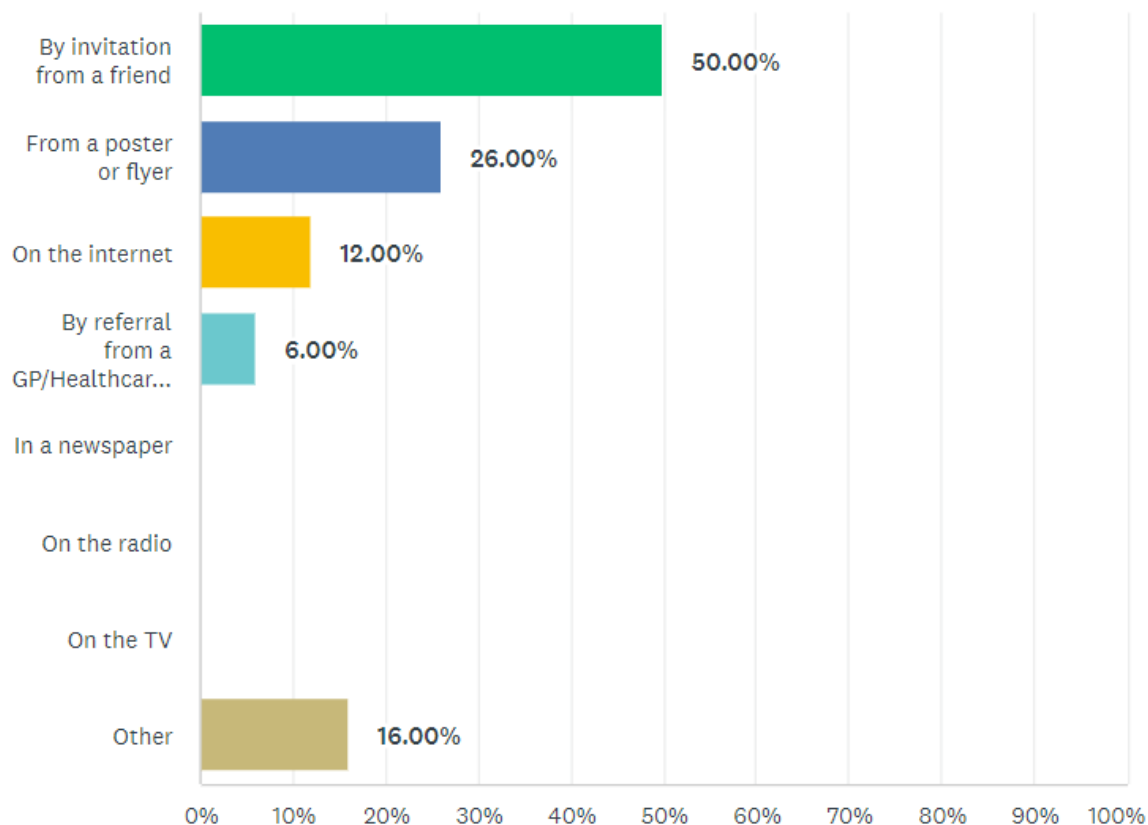


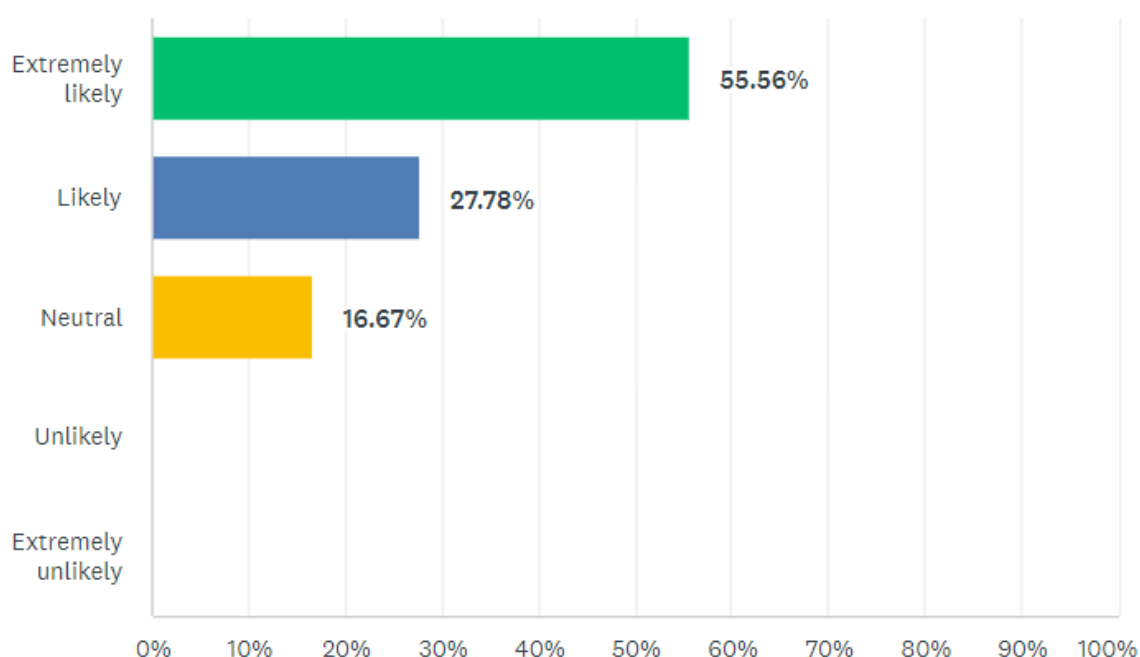
Figure 4. Warm Space visitor survey - How did you hear about the Warm Space?



Developing the Warm Space concept to provide year-round support

4.69 The evaluation indicated that there is scope to develop the Warm Space programme as a year-round programme, rather than just over the winter months. The survey with Warm Space partners indicated that 56% are "extremely likely" to run the Warm Space even after winter, while 27.78% responded that they are "likely" to do so. The survey results indicate that there is strong support and demand for continuing the Warm Space facilities beyond the winter months.

Figure 5. Warm Space partner staff survey - How likely is it that your organisation will continue to run the same activities that you have delivered at your Warm Space after the winter season?



4.70 The evidence from the survey with Warm Space visitors indicates that the majority of people are accessing the Warm Space to socialise (77%) rather than to have somewhere warm to be (20%). The focus on Warm Spaces as places to socialise suggests that the Warm Spaces could broaden the definition of 'warm' to include the warmth experienced from connecting with other people rather than just providing physical warmth.

4.71 The view of Clarion Futures staff is that the Warm Space offer has now moved away from delivering immediate need but should be provided as a standard service/activity as part of its core offer. This is supported by the evidence from this evaluation.

Developing guidance for Warm Space partners

4.72 The evaluation indicated that Warm Space partners could benefit from 'How-to guides' that detail how to set up the Warm Space, how to manage funding etc. This would ensure that everyone knows the key elements of a Warm Space and how they work in practice.

Improving diversity

- 4.73 The evidence suggests that there is scope to support Warm Spaces to appeal to a diverse range of people and ensure they are as inclusive. A Warm Space visitor at the Queen Adelaide Community Centre noted that "it's rare to find somewhere to come where you're not looked at differently just because your culture is not the same as others". Clarion Futures should consider how to create a 'culturally competent' Warm Space, i.e. one that considered the cultural and/or religious needs of the local community. This could be by ensuring that there are staff/volunteers that speak the local community languages, dietary requirements are catered for, the activities are those that would be attractive and of interest to people from different minority ethnic groups.

Threats

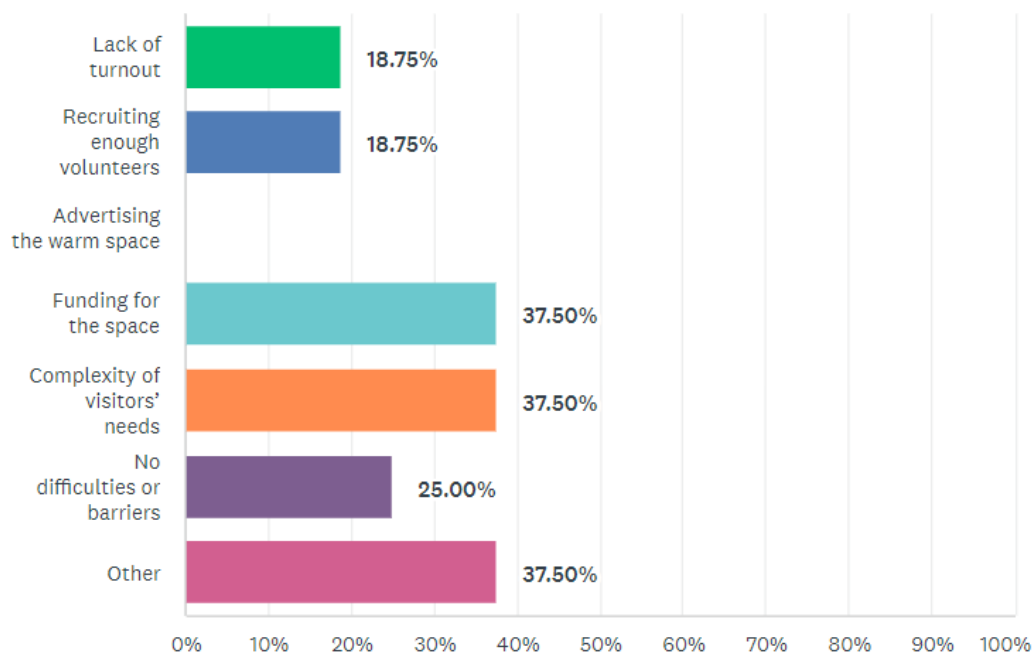
Capacity of Warm Space partners

- 4.74 The evidence from the evaluation suggests that there is a lack of capacity amongst Warm Space partners to undertake the administrative and reporting requirements that come with being a Warm Space. This is seen as a threat as it could potentially prevent some partners from coming forward or sustaining the programme because they have too much to do.
- 4.75 Moreover, partners can only welcome so many visitors. Many Warm Spaces do not currently have this issue, but spaces such as The Royals in Rainham are very popular and may struggle to meet the demands of the community at the size it currently is. Staff are seeking to run additional sessions to ensure that they can accommodate more people. The challenge is ensuring that the centre can maintain a community feel while also being able to increase its capacity to support more people.

Volunteer recruitment

- 4.76 A potential threat to the Warm Space programme is volunteer recruitment. For 19% of Warm Space partners this was a barrier to delivery. Whilst this is not the majority, it may be worth Clarion Futures reviewing how volunteers are recruited at the Warm Spaces to increase capacity.

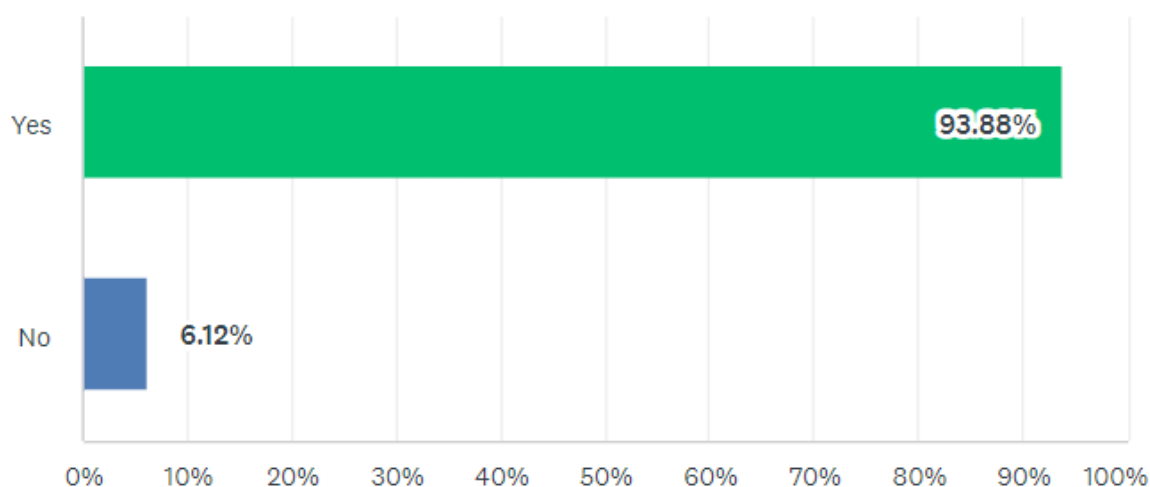
Figure 6. Warm Space partner staff survey - Have you encountered any difficulties or barriers to delivery?



Impact of the weather

- 4.77 The evidence from the evaluation highlighted mixed experience about how the weather impacted the footfall in Warm Spaces. For some people, accessing the Warm Space in colder months can be challenging as they don't want to leave their homes when it is cold outside. On the other hand, others see the Warm Space as an extension of their living room and want to be somewhere warm in the cold weather.
- 4.78 The survey demonstrated the nearly every participant that uses the Warm Space will continue to stay connected now the cold season has ended. This suggests that the Warm Space footfall is unlikely to be reduced now should Warm Spaces continue into the summer months.
- 4.79 The evidence from the qualitative research indicated that visitors appreciate the range of opportunities, from the social aspect, signposting to services, and free meals and this would encourage them to stay connected.

Figure 7. Warm Space visitor survey - Do you think you will stay connected after the cold season has ended?



4.80 Footfall in the Warm Space can be impacted by the weather. A warm winter may reduce numbers, but equally the cold can prevent people from wanting to go outside and travel to a Warm Space.

Warm Packs SWOT

Strengths

- 4.81 Clarion Futures internal staff see the Warm Packs as very beneficial to the programme, noting that people appreciate free items.
- 4.82 The ability to pick and choose Warm Pack items was seen as beneficial so that Warm Space visitors could select items that suit them best rather than taking all items.
- 4.83 Warm Space partners appreciated that the Rothesay Foundation had been flexible with the Warm Pack items, and that they were happy for some swaps to be made to better fit community needs.
- 4.84 Clarion Futures staff provided support for Warm Space partners if they were struggling with storage space and would try to find a work around if there were distribution issues.
- 4.85 Ciara's role in supporting the Warm Spaces administration is seen as greatly beneficial. The discussions highlighted that her role alleviated some of the administrative burden of Warm Pack organisation from others in the team. In addition, Ciara also streamlined the data collection process so that it runs more smoothly in future.

Weaknesses/Challenges

- 4.86 The evidence from Clarion Futures staff suggests that the administration of the Warm Packs proved to be a challenge as it was very time consuming. Warm Space partners

had to order items as well as provide data reporting for the Rothesay Foundation in addition to running the Warm Space.

- 4.87 This was a big administrative task for Warm Space partners whose capacity is already stretched, and resulted in some partners saying no to Warm Packs which Clarion Futures staff hadn't envisaged. Clarion Futures and the Rothesay Foundation gave out 1,167 whole Warm Packs, but they had the capacity for 2,000 funding wise.
- 4.88 Another challenge arose from Warm Space visitors who didn't necessarily want every item in the Warm Pack, this added additional administrative burden as partners could just order one Warm Pack but had to order separate items.
- 4.89 The understanding about how the Warm Pack administration worked varied across different Warm Space partners, highlighting a weakness in communicating the Warm Pack service. Some weren't sure if they needed to buy the Warm Pack items or whether the items are sent to them. Others weren't aware that visitors could select individual Warm Pack items.
- 4.90 A significant challenge for Warm Space partners was storing Warm Pack items in community/associated assets with limited space. Another issue with the Warm Pack items being sent to community/associated assets is that some people struggle to take home bulky items (especially if they have any mobility issues).
- 4.91 In addition, some Warm Space partners wanted to prioritise purchasing items from local shops, as opposed to the suggested Amazon or Argos. This also added to the time taken to order items and administrative burden.
- 4.92 Some staff were concerned that because some people will have already accessed the Warm Packs, there will be less need for them for future years.

Opportunities

Relieve administrative burden

- 4.93 To relieve the administrative burden to Warm Space partners, Clarion Futures staff suggested a range of options.
- 4.94 The first was providing Warm Pack 'bundles', where Warm Space partners have the option to choose between pack A, B or C. Each bundle could differ based on the key needs of that community (e.g. cold, damp, family support etc). Some staff felt that having a different set of items for each community partner may make Warm Pack admin processes more logistically difficult. The pros and cons of offering flexibility with the Warm Pack items might therefore need to be considered further.
- 4.95 The second was having a consistent approach that enabled Warm Space visitors to complete a form identifying which items they would like.
- 4.96 The evaluation indicated that it would be the preference of Warm Space partners for Clarion Futures internal staff to order the Warm Pack items once the Warm Space partners had shared the items to be ordered.

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- 4.97 Providing a Warm Space Programme Coordinator would alleviate some of the administrative pressures.

Send items directly to visitors

- 4.98 The evaluation indicated that Clarion Futures should explore the potential for Warm Pack items to be sent directly to Warm Space visitors' homes. This would help with problems around storage and where visitors find it difficult to carry items home. However, not every visitor will want to give their data to Clarion Housing so this may need to be considered. In addition, this option may risk taking away the opportunity for partners to better get to know their attendees by ordering Warm Packs on their behalf.

Rebrand Warm Packs

- 4.99 There is an opportunity to consider rebranding the Warm Packs to prevent confusion about whether people have to receive all or some items. Rebranding as 'Warm Items' is a potential solution to this challenge.

Additional items

- 4.100 The evaluation indicated that there is an opportunity to expand the items available. Visitors were seeking the following to be included: sleeping bags and children's items such as nappies, clothing, toys.
- 4.101 Following this evaluation, Clarion Futures should review the Warm Pack items provided. It is recommended that the Warm Space Working Group, Communities Team and the Rothesay Foundation are consulted on the items that are seen as a needed.

Threats

Administrative burden

- 4.102 The administrative burden of the Warm Packs is considered a threat as it could potentially prevent some Warm Space partners from getting involved in the Warm Pack process again.
- 4.103 There was a sense among some staff members that a redesign process of the Warm Pack administration could be manageable in time for next winter. Logistical issues will need to be smoothed over with the Rothesay Foundation so that communication to community partners is clear.

5. The effectiveness of the Warm Space programme and Warm Packs in providing support to people in the community

- 5.01 This part of the evaluation report is focused on research question 2.
- 5.02 The evidence to answer this research question has come from the quantitative data provided to the Rothesay Foundation, the survey with Warm Space partners and visits, as well as the qualitative engagement work undertaken at the 9 site visits.
- 5.03 The following calculations have been modelled on the assumption that the majority of Warm Spaces ran from October 2023 through to March 2024, and most within the same period the year before.

Total number of people attending the Warm Spaces

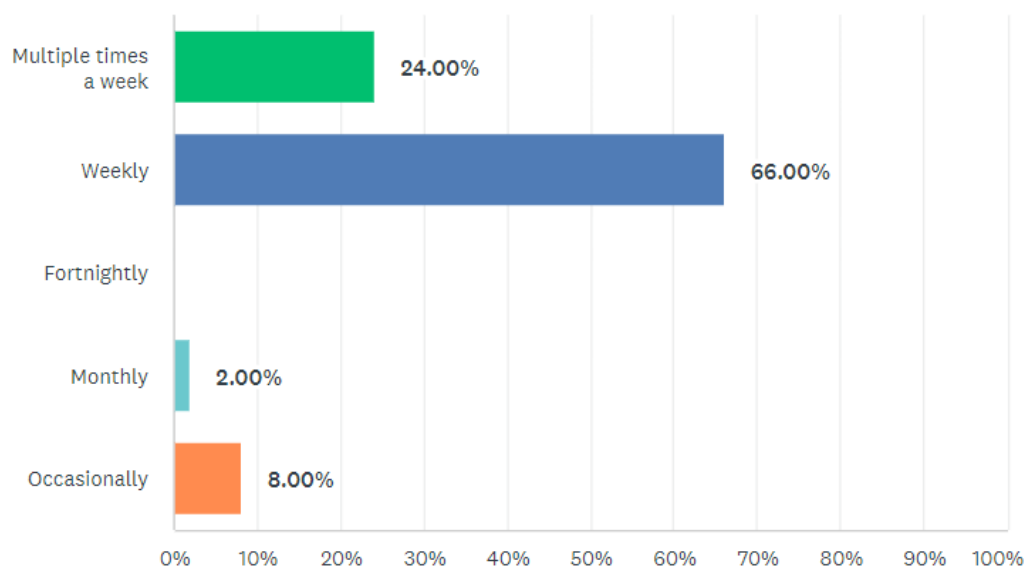
- 5.04 Between October 2022 and May 2023, there were over 10,000 visits across 28 Warm Spaces. Between October 2023 and April 2024, there were 43,691 visits across 53 Warm Spaces.

Table 3. Warm Space footfall and estimated unique visitors for October 2022 to May 23 (8 months) and October 2023 to April 2024 (7 months).

Timeframe	No of Warm Spaces	Footfall across the Warm Spaces	Estimated no. of unique visits
October 2022 to May 2023 (8 months)	28	10,000	1,069
October 2023 to April 2024 (7 months)	53	43,691	4,836

- 5.05 To estimate the number of individual visitors to the 28 Warm Spaces in the eight months between October 2022 and May 2023, and the 53 Warm Spaces in the seven months between October 2023 and April 2024, the survey data and total footfall for timeframe is used.
- 5.06 The survey indicated how often visitors frequented the Warm Spaces, 24% visited multiple times a week, 66% visited weekly, 2% visited monthly, and 8% visited occasionally. To calculate the number of unique visitors, it is assumed that the frequency of visits is the same across both the seven month and eight month period. The following assumption is made:
- 24% of visitors attend 2 times a week.
 - 66% of visitors attend once a week.
 - 2% of visitors attend once a month.
 - 8% of visitors attend only once.

Figure 8. Warm Space visitor survey – How often do you visit a Warm Space?



5.07 The footfall is distributed for each period using the survey data on frequency of visits.

Table 4. Footfall distribution based on survey data on frequency of visits.

Frequency of visits	Distribution amongst footfall of 10,000 (8 months 2022/23)	Distribution amongst footfall of 43,691 (7 months 2023/24)
24% of visitors attend 2 times a week.	2,400	10,485.84
66% of visitors attend once a week.	6,600	28,835.06
2% of visitors attend once a month.	200	873.82
8% of visitors attend only once.	800	3,495.28
Total footfall	10,000	43,691

5.08 The unique visitors for each 'frequency of visitors' group for 8 months (32 weeks) and 7 months (28 weeks) is estimated, using this process:

- Total number of visitors per visitor = Frequency of visits in either 32 or 28 weeks
- Unique visitors = Footfall distribution / Total visits per visitor

Table 5. Unique visitors amongst footfall of 10,000 across 8 months (32 weeks)

Frequency of visits	Total visits per visitor	Unique visitors
Visitors who attend 2 times a week.	64 (2 x 32)	38 (2,400 / 64)

Visitors attend once a week.	32 (1 x 32)	206 (6,600/32)
Visitors attend once a month.	8	25 (200 / 8)
Visitors attend only once.	1	800 (800 / 1)
	Total unique visitors	1,069

Table 6. Unique visitors amongst footfall of 43,691,000 across 7 months (28 weeks)

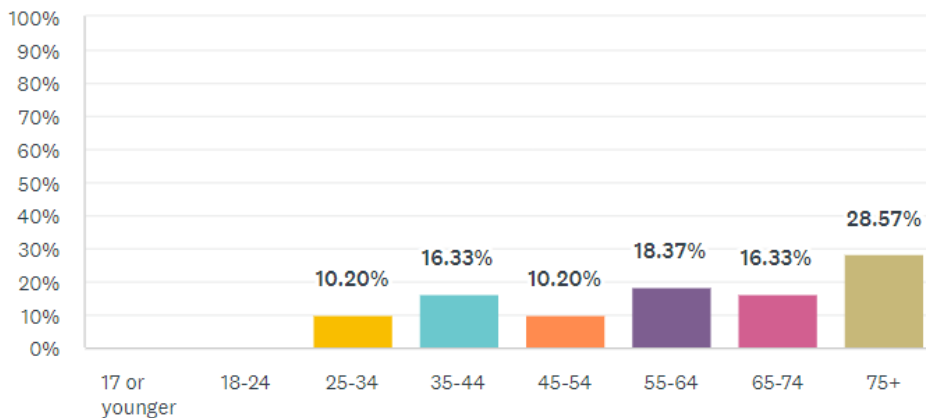
Frequency of visits	Total visits per person	Unique visitors
Visitors who attend 2 times a week.	56 (2 x 28)	187 (10,485.84 / 56)
Visitors attend once a week.	28 (1 x 28)	1,029 (28,835.06 / 28)
Visitors attend once a month.	7	125 (873.82 / 7)
Visitors attend only once.	1	3,495 (3,495.28 / 1)
	Total unique visitors	4,836

- 5.09 The estimated unique visitors for the 8 months in 2022/23 are 1,069 unique visitors amongst a footfall of 10,000.
- 5.10 The estimated unique visitors for the 7 months in 2023/24 is 4,836 unique visitors amongst a footfall of 43,691.

Profile of people attending the Warm Spaces

- 5.11 In relation to the age profile of participants, the evidence from the surveys that are provided to the Rothesay Foundation from Warm Space partners indicate that the majority of Warm Space visitors in 2023/24 were over the age of 55. On average 62% of Warm Space visitors were over the age of 55 years, 36% were over the age of 65 years, and 2% were under the age of 55.
- 5.12 The evidence from the Housing LIN evaluation is that Warm Spaces attract people across a range of ages. According to the Housing LIN survey with visitors, the majority of visitors tend to be over the age of 55+ (63%), with 45% over the age of 65. However, the Warm Spaces also attract people age between 25 and 54 (36%).
- 5.13 Whilst there is no survey data on the number of people younger than 25 using the Warm Spaces, the site visits indicated that some Warm Spaces are attracting this age group. The evidence highlights that Warm Spaces are predominantly serving older people living in the community and there is scope for Clarion Futures to consider ways to encourage younger people to use the Warm Spaces.

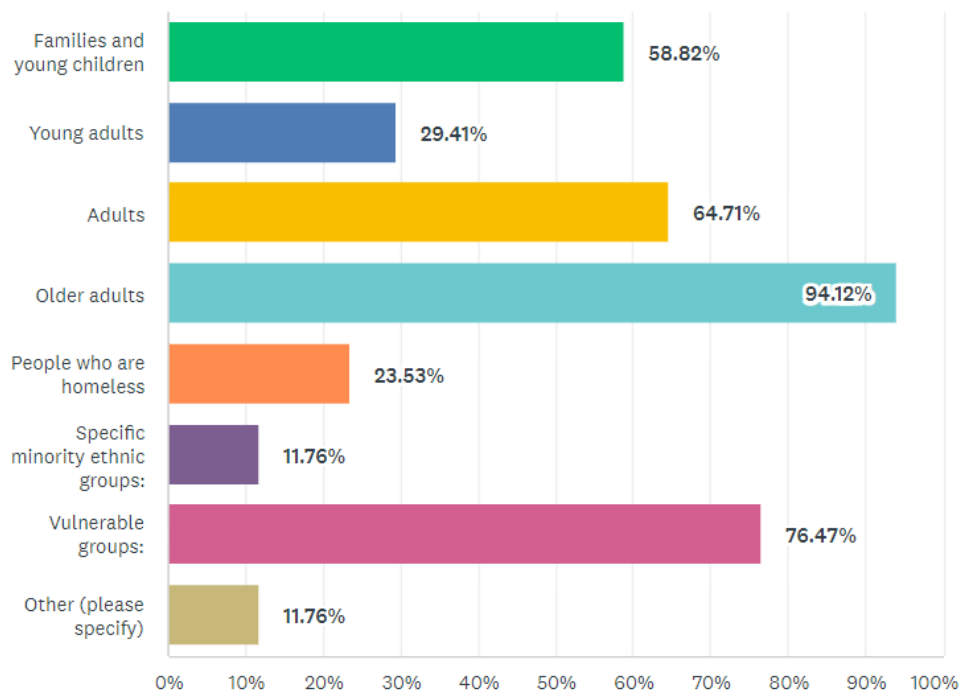
Figure 9. Warm Space visitor survey – Which of these age groups do you belong to?



5.14 In relation to the other profile characteristics of Warm Space visitors aside from age, the Warm Space partner survey results indicate that the Warm Spaces are typically providing support to 'vulnerable' groups, including in some instances, people who are homeless. A smaller minority indicated that Warm Spaces are typically used by minority ethnic group.

5.15 This suggests that Warm Spaces are a key asset in the community for people that are potentially struggling and need extra support. The evidence indicates that Clarion Futures could explore providing a 'culturally competent' service that supports people from minority ethnic groups at the Warm Spaces.

Figure 10. Warm Space partner staff survey - Who typically uses your services? (Please select all that apply)



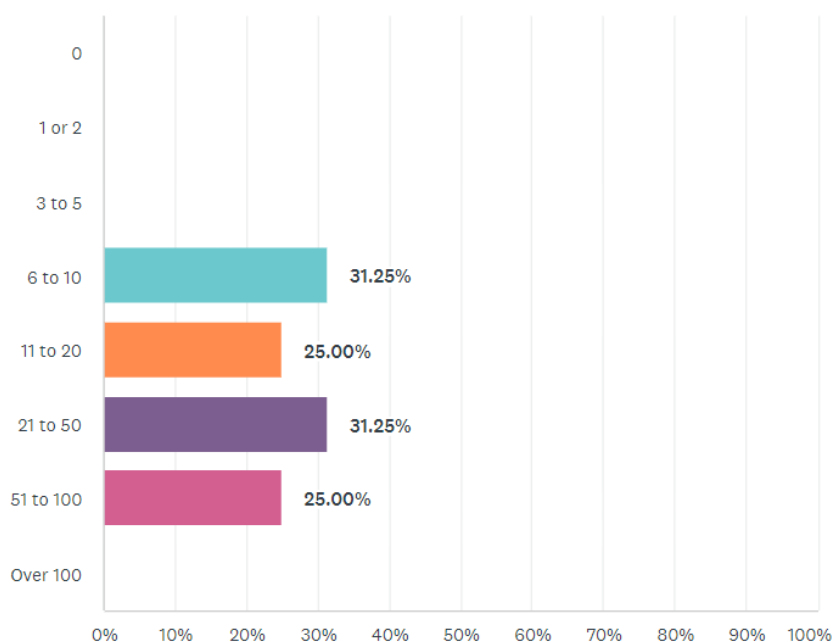
5.16 According to the survey data, the majority of visitors (65%) attend with other people, of these 38.46% visit with family members and 26.92% with friends. A sizable minority

(31%) attend the Warm Space on their own. This indicates that the Warm Spaces are providing places to socialise for those that already have a social group and want to maintain socialising activity, as well as people that are seeking to use the Warm Space to find ways of socialising.

Attendance at sessions

- 5.17 The evidence from the evaluation is that Warm Spaces are successfully engaging people in using the service and building loyalty with Warm Space visitors. For example, the visitor survey indicates that the majority of visitors (90%) are repeat attendees, with 10% reporting it was their first visit.
- 5.18 The Warm Space partner survey results from partners indicate that attendance at sessions range from smaller sessions with 6-10 people to larger sessions with 51-100 people per session. The most common attendance ranges are 6-10 and 21-50 people per session, both making up 31% of the sessions each. Sessions with 11-20 and 51-100 people are less common but still significant, each representing 25% of the sessions. This indicates that the Warm Spaces are well utilised and play an important role in the community.

Figure 11. Warm Space partner staff survey - What is the average number of attendees at a session?



The type of support that Warm Spaces provide

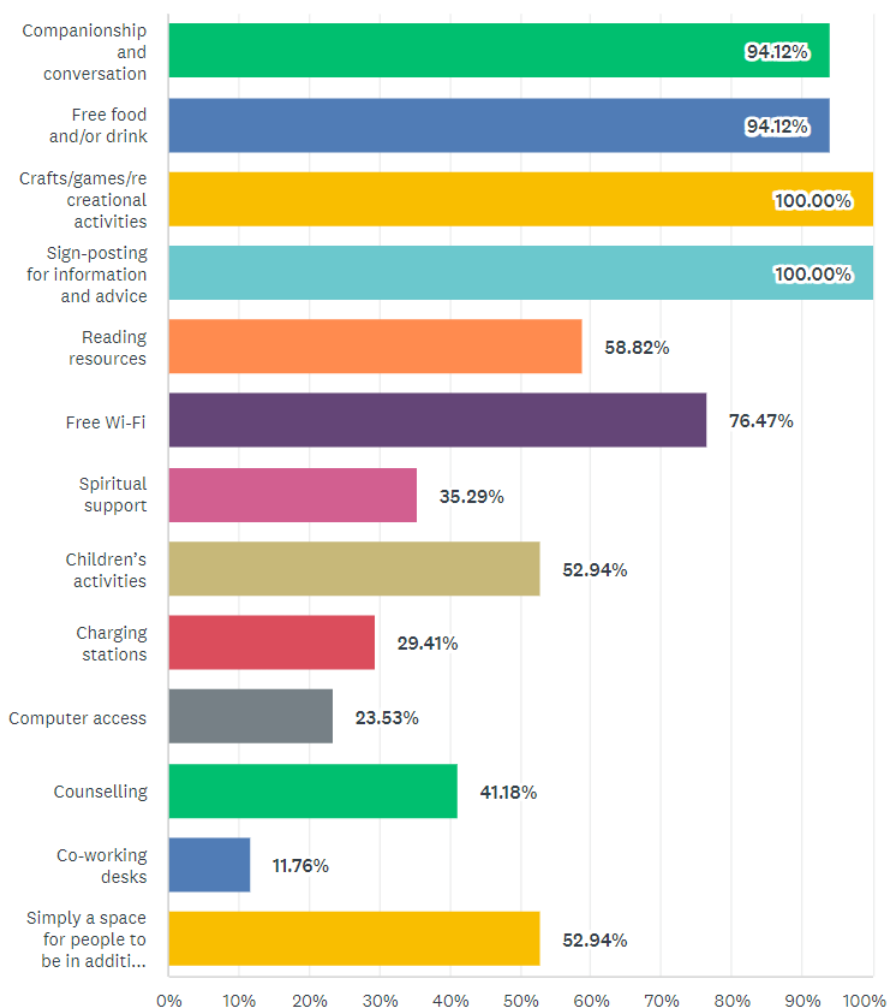
- 5.19 The Warm Space programme provides support to visitors in a variety of ways. The following graph indicates the types of services/support provided in the Warm Spaces from the partner surveys.

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5.20 The most common services/support provided by Warm Spaces, are companionship and conversation, free food and/or drink, crafts/games/recreational activities and signposting for information and advice.

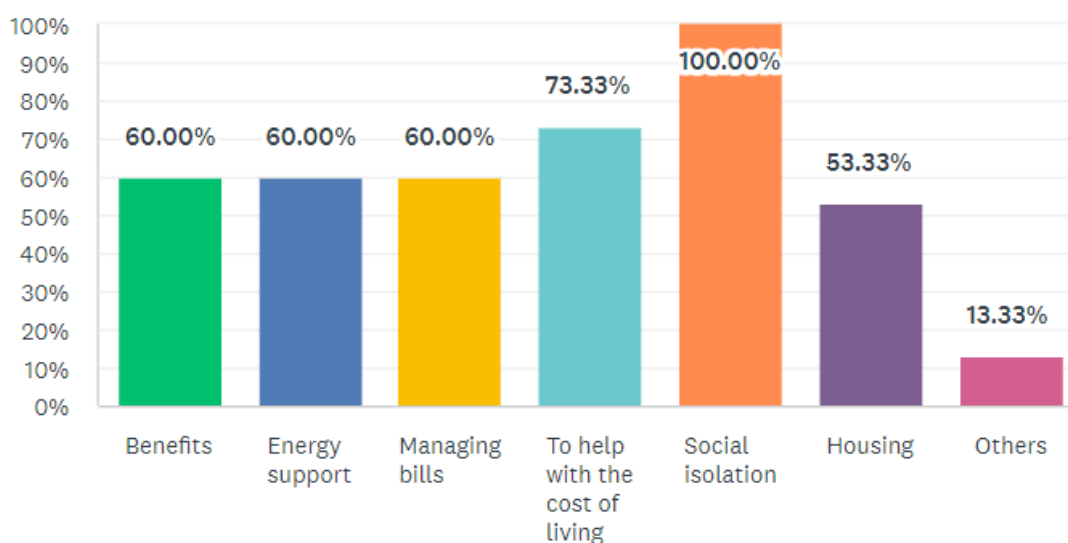
5.21 The evidence from the qualitative research with Warm Space visitors/partners indicates that this broad range of services provided helps to attract a wide and diverse range of visitors.

Figure 12. Warm Space partner staff survey - What facilities and services are you delivering in your Warm Space sessions? (Tick all that apply)



5.22 The Warm Space partner survey also indicated that Warm Spaces are providing information to visitors on a range of topics, the most popular being on social isolation (100%) but also on topics like helping with the cost of living (73%), energy support (60%) and benefits (60%) advice.

Figure 13. Warm Space partner staff survey - Have you shared information about any of the following?



5.23 The qualitative research with Warm Space visitors is that the Warm Spaces are acting as a safe space where people can come and share their concerns on these topics and not feel as though they will be judged. Often visitors wouldn't know where else to turn for advice.

5.24 In some cases, Warm Spaces are seeking to develop their relationships with external providers to strengthen the services they provide. The aim of one Warm Space is to bring GPs into the space to offer wellbeing advice and increase visitors access to health services.

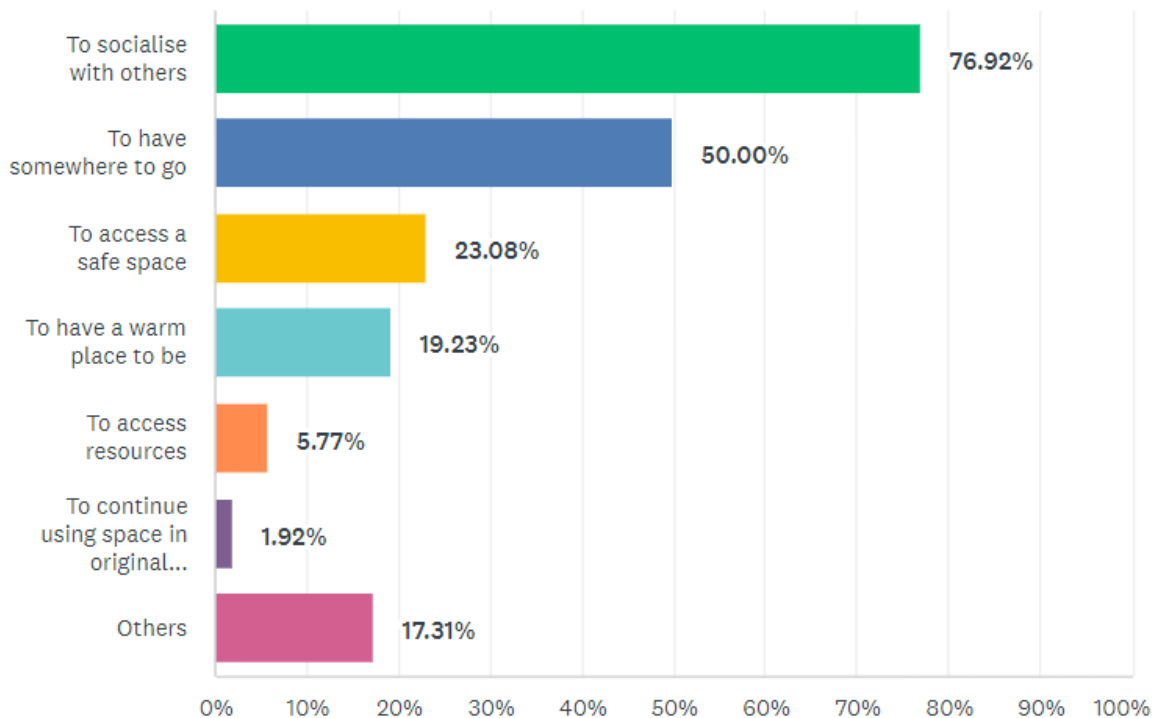
5.25 The Warm Spaces also provide support through the distribution of Warm Packs.

Effectiveness of support/services provided at the Warm Spaces

5.26 The effectiveness of the support/services provided at the Warm Spaces is evidenced through the evaluation.

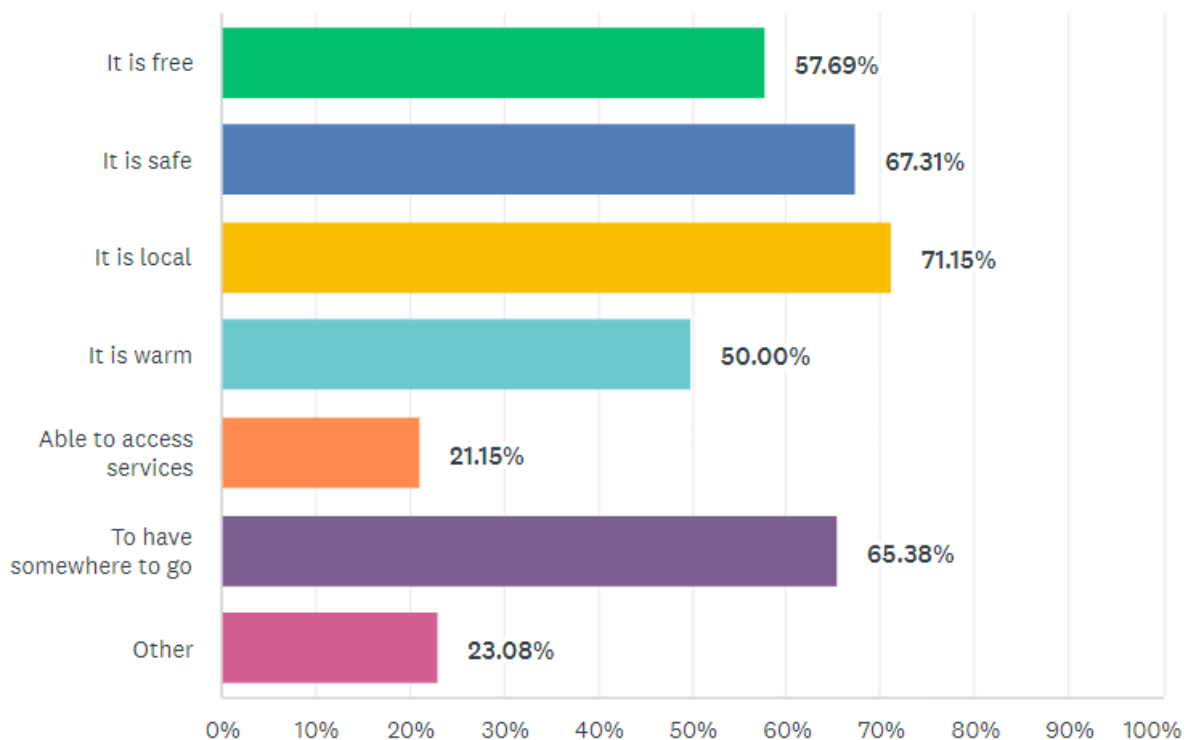
5.27 The findings from the Warm Space visitor survey indicates that the companionship and conversation services/support provided by 94% Warm Spaces are effective as 77% of visitors attend the Warm Space to socialise with others. The qualitative engagement with visitors supports this as people report that the Warm Spaces *"provide a friendly place to chat and socialise"*, *"the Warm Space means that I leave my house and talk to people, rather than staying at home and talking to the TV"*.

Figure 14. Warm Space visitor survey - Why do you attend the Warm Space? (select all that apply)



5.28 The evaluation demonstrated that the Warm Spaces were effective at signposting visitors to information and advice. 21% of survey respondents said that they like that they can access services at the Warm Space.

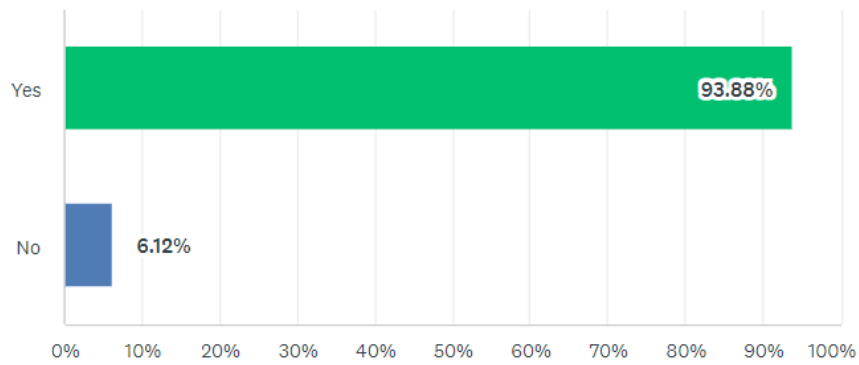
Figure 15. Warm Space visitor survey – What do you like about coming to the Warm Space? (select all that apply)



- 5.29 The site visit to the Colebrook Warm Space in Plymouth provided a good example of how signposting to services is effective at supporting people. Warm Space visitors are signposted to the Tamar View Community Centre food bank. Tamar View staff shared that they have a *"really good"* working relationship with Colebrook, and they work on various projects together for the benefit of St Budeaux and Barne Barton community. This suggests that as well as supporting visitors, signposting helps to build relationships with other community organisations.
- 5.30 The Riverside Centre signpost people to family support services using a Family Hub Connector. The Family Hub Connector attended 9 Stay & Play sessions (funded in part by Clarion Futures Warm Spaces) and three other sessions at another community centre. In total, the connector spoke with 76 families, had 32 enquiries, 6 enquiries requiring more complex and focused support, 7 food poverty referrals, 6 fuel poverty referrals, and 9 benefit support referrals. This outreach to the centre began in September 2023. This highlights the centres successful facilitation in signposting people who need assistance with fuel, food, and benefits, to the necessary community support.
- 5.31 In addition, the site visits highlighted that people who attended the Warm Space group called 'Together Time' in Selsey could be signposted to the 'Care Shop' on Selsey high street. The Care Shop connects those in the community with a range of community groups, including wellbeing support groups. The Care Shop is run by the same charity as the Warm Space and the two have a very close relationship. The evidence highlights that the Care Shop has seen an increase in referrals because of the Warm Space programme. In addition, the research suggest that the Warm Space has helped the community support each other and the Care Shop staff see the Warm Space programme as effective at supporting people in the community.
- 5.32 Whilst the intention of the Warm Spaces was grounded in the ability to provide somewhere warm to be, particularly over the winter months, the evaluation found that access to physical warmth isn't necessarily the primary reason visitors use the Warm Space. Despite this, 50% of visitors report that they like that the Warm Space provides somewhere warm for them to be. This suggests that for at least half of visitors, the Warm Spaces are supporting them to be warm during the winter months.
- 5.33 The Warm Space visitor survey also demonstrated the ways in which a Warm Space can be effective in supporting people. It highlighted that the following features of a Warm Space encourage people to use it: being local, safe, free, and warm.
- 5.34 Furthermore, the survey results demonstrate the positive impact the Warm Space has created, as evidenced by the overwhelming desire of visitors to continue attending even after the cold season has passed. An impressive 98% of respondents stated that they want to keep coming to the Warm Space, suggesting that the services and support provided have been valuable and meaningful to them. The figure below shows the visitor's responses to "Will you stay connected after the cold season has ended?".

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Figure 16. Warm Space visitor survey – Do you think you will stay connected after the cold season has ended?



5.35 Additional evidence on the effectiveness of the Warm Spaces can be found in the section on the social and financial benefits.

6. The social and financial impacts of the Warm Space programme (including Warm Packs) for visitors

- 6.01 This section provides a response to research question 3, it demonstrates the social and financial impact of the Warm Spaces and Warm Packs for visitors to the Warm Space.
- 6.02 The evidence from this part of the evaluation has been derived from the face-to-face engagement work and surveys with Warm Space partners and visitors as well as the observations from the site visits.

Social impacts for visitors to the Warm Space and recipients of the Warm Packs

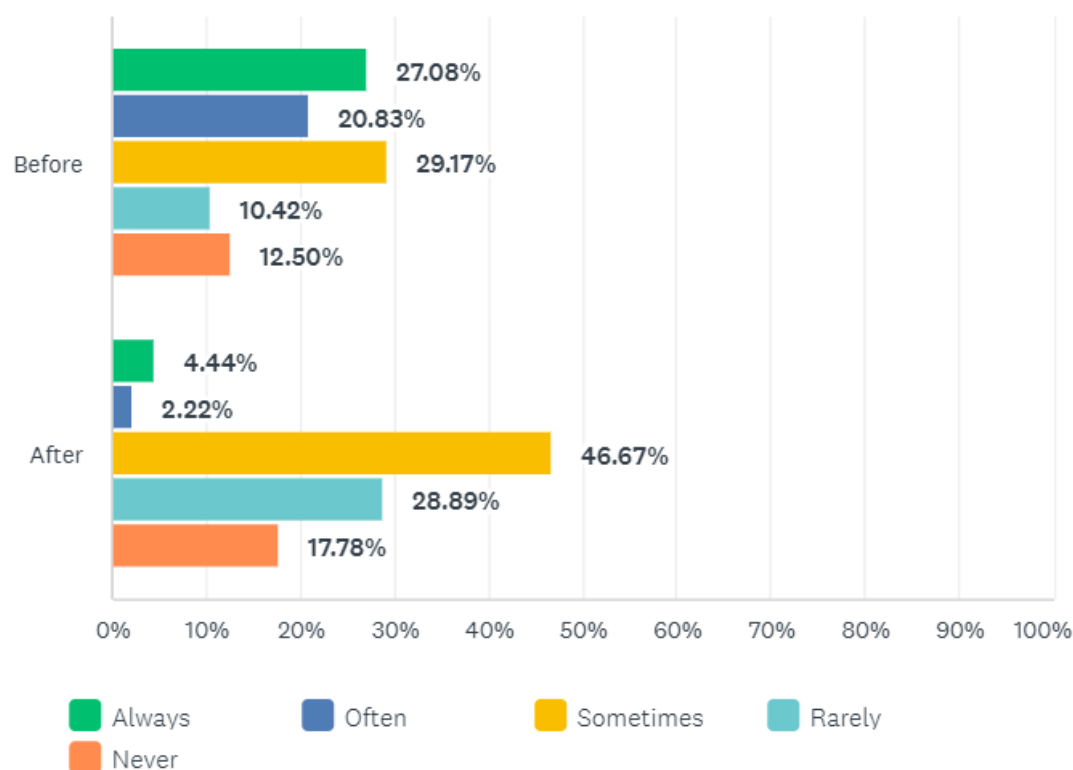
- 6.03 The evidence from the evaluation indicates that the Warm Spaces (and the distribution of Warm Packs) have had a variety of social impacts for visitors:
- Reduced loneliness/isolation
 - Improved mental health
 - Increased resilience
 - Improved childhood development
 - Increased physical health
 - Improved healthy eating
- 6.04 This section provides a summary of evidence in relation to these social benefits.

Reduced loneliness/isolation

- 6.05 The evidence indicates that Warm Spaces provide substantial benefits by offering a social environment for visitors. Some sessions are specifically focused on social isolation and loneliness, for example, one Warm Space offered 'Time to Talk', a service to help ease loneliness and social isolation among visitors. Whilst others are providing an opportunity to socialise as a byproduct of the Warm Space activity.
- 6.06 The survey results support this: for 77% of respondents, the reason they attend the Warm Space is to socialise with others.
- 6.07 The visitor survey also asked people how often they felt lonely before and after the Warm Space opened. The data indicates a positive impact of the Warm Space on reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation. There is a notable shift from higher frequencies ("Always" and "Often") to lower frequencies ("Sometimes" and "Rarely") and "Never". While the number of people who "Sometimes" feel lonely has increased,

this is a moderate frequency compared to "Always" and "Often", suggesting that the intensity of loneliness has lessened.

Figure 17. Warm Space visitor survey - How often did/do you feel lonely or isolated before and after coming to the Warm Space?



- 6.08 The qualitative research suggested that the Warm Space was reducing social isolation and loneliness amongst visitors. Many visitors reported that they would not have opportunities to socialise without these spaces and the chance to socialise enables them to form friendships, which has significantly enhanced their lives.
- 6.09 One visitor expressed feeling so welcomed that they considered the other attendees as “all my family now”. One Warm Space facilitated the reconciliation of a family after a period of strained relationships. At Foundation 92 Warm Space, families who need extra support can be referred to the centre’s family well-being programme.

Improved mental health

- 6.10 The Warm Space visits highlighted the ways that attending the sessions can help to improve mental health amongst visitors. Warm Spaces can signpost to mental health services, while also providing activities that help with mental health. For example, one Warm Space offered an aromatherapy session for its visitors. Research indicates that this can help bring a range of mental health benefits, including potentially reduced anxiety and depression,¹ in addition to the physical health benefits it can offer.

¹ Perry, N., Perry, E. (2006). Aromatherapy in the Management of Psychiatric Disorders. *CNS Drugs* 20, 257–280. Available at: [Aromatherapy in the Management of Psychiatric Disorders | CNS Drugs \(springer.com\)](https://www.springer.com/journal/10074/issue/10)

- 6.11 Another Warm Space enabled visitors to try gardening, which supported visitors with the mental benefits of spending time in nature. Many of the Warm Spaces also offered creative activities, with visitors taking part in activities such as reading, knitting, or even biscuit decorating. Research suggests that creative activities such as these can have significant calming mental benefits.² Some Warm Space partners have mental health first aid qualifications.
- 6.12 At Bolton Wanderers in the Community, a senior NHS psychological practitioner attended the Warm Space to deliver a workshop on talking therapies and the various ways in which members can seek support from mental health services in Bolton.
- 6.13 At the Young People's Shop Warm Space, a support worker has been conducting emotional support sessions at the Warm Space, to support people with a range of mental health issues. The support worker highlighted that they are seeing an increase in quite severe mental health issues in the young people, who "often have nowhere else to turn to". The support worker noted that "the gratitude I have received from these clients for thirty minutes of my full attention is humbling. It is hard but rewarding work".
- 6.14 One Warm Space visitor who lives with a long-term mental health condition has commented that attending the Warm Space has helped to improve their mental health. The visitor felt safe, connected, and experienced a boost in confidence through learning how to cook.
- 6.15 The Saheli Hub Warm Space supports men to meet other likeminded men, make friends, and address gender norms. Thinking critically about gender norms can have a positive impact on men's mental health on a wider scale.³
- 6.16 The evidence from the evaluation indicates that the Warm Spaces are improving visitors' mental health in a variety of ways:
- Increased sense of purpose and outlook on life
 - Support managing anxiety
 - Support through trauma
 - Support through grief

Increased sense of purpose and outlook on life

- 6.17 The evidence suggests that the Warm Spaces boosted visitor's sense of purpose and outlook on life. Visitors highlighted the following benefits to attending the Warm Space:
- *"It gives me something to look forward to".*

² Adams-Price, C.E. and Morse, L.W. (2018) 'Crafts as serious hobbies: Impact and benefits in later life', *Craft Research*, 9(1), pp. 93–102 Available at: [Crafts as serious hobbies: Impact and benefits in later life: Ingenta Connect](#)

³ Rice, S., Oliffe, J., Seidler, Z., Borschmann, R., Pirkis, J., Reavley, N., & Patton, G. (2021). Gender norms and the mental health of boys and young men. *The Lancet Public Health*, 6(8), e541–e542. Available at: [Gender norms and the mental health of boys and young men - The Lancet Public Health](#)

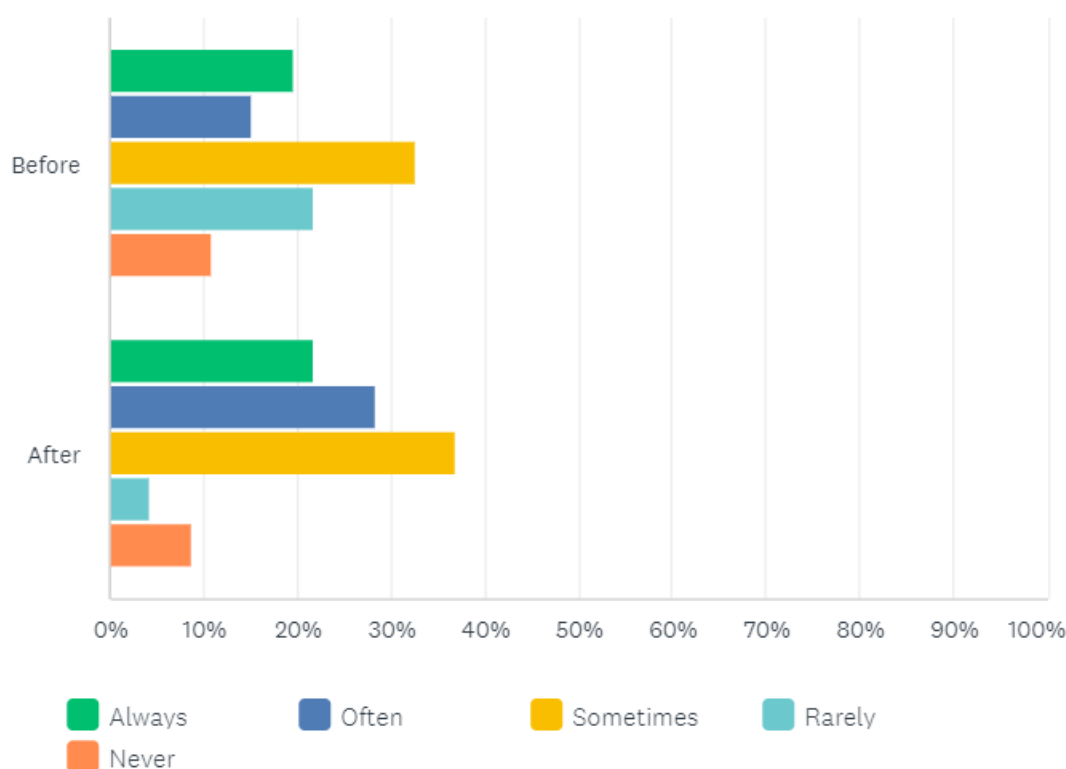
Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

- *"It gives me a will to live".*
- *"Without the Warm Space, I wouldn't be here".*
- *"I wouldn't be the person I am today without it".*
- *"It gets me out the house".*

6.18 The Warm Space visitor survey asked people how often they feel they led a purposeful life before and after coming to the Warm Space. The data suggests that there is a notable increase in the number of people who "Always" and "Often" feel they lead a purposeful life after visiting the Warm Space. This suggests a significant positive impact on their sense of purpose. The decrease in the "Rarely" and "Never" categories indicates that fewer people feel a lack of purpose after utilising the Warm Space.

6.19 Overall, the Warm Space appears to enhance the sense of purpose in visitors, with a significant shift from lower to higher frequencies of feeling purposeful in life.

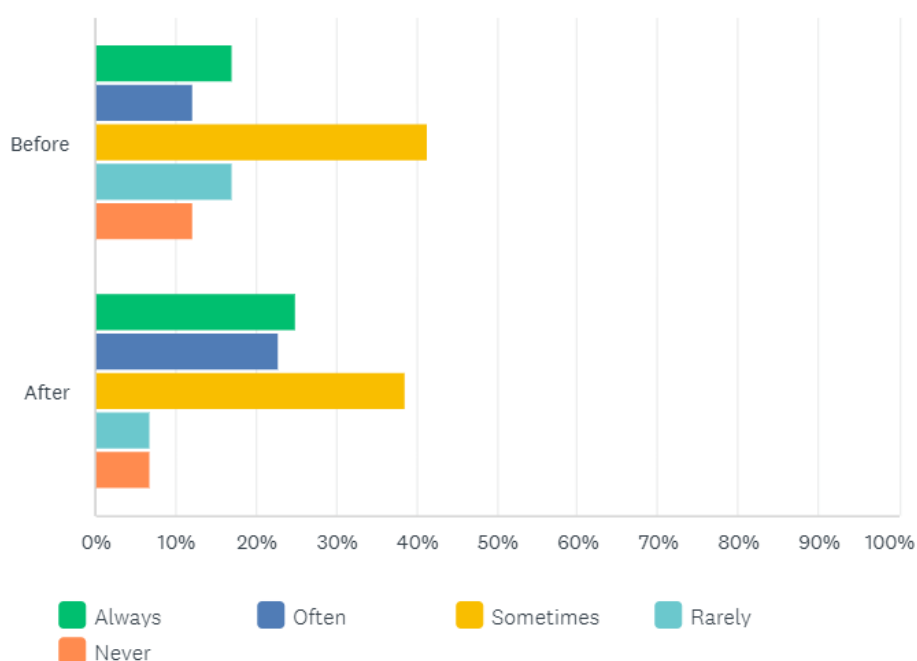
Figure 18. Warm Space visitor survey - How often did/do you feel you led a purposeful life before and after coming to the Warm Space?



6.20 The Warm Space visitor survey asked people how often they feel optimistic about their future before and after coming to the Warm Space. There is a noticeable increase in the number of people who "Always" and "Often" feel optimistic about their future after visiting the Warm Space, suggesting a significant positive impact on their outlook. The decrease in the "Rarely" and "Never" categories indicates that fewer people feel pessimistic about their future after using the Warm Space.

6.21 The "Sometimes" category remained stable, indicating that while some people moved from lower frequencies of optimism to higher ones, a consistent portion still experiences a moderate level of optimism. Overall, the Warm Space appears to enhance the sense of optimism about the future in its users, with a significant shift from lower to higher frequencies of feeling optimistic.

Figure 19. Warm Space visitor survey - How often did/do you feel optimistic about your future before and after coming to the Warm Space?



Support managing anxiety

6.22 The qualitative evidence identified the support that Warm Spaces can provide in helping some visitors to manage anxiety. The evidence illustrated that Warm Spaces provide a safe space for visitors, that they feel comfortable retuning to, including those experiencing severe anxiety. This is because of the supportive community that a Warm Space provides.

6.23 For example, one visitor with anxiety shared that attending the Warm Space helped to ease them in to being around other people. Talking to staff that understood their needs and were non-judgmental helped slowly alleviate some of their anxieties around being in the social world and return to their everyday routines once more. Another Warm Space visitor had a similar experience, telling staff that their "world has got really small since covid", with the visitor suffering from anxiety about going out. However, staff noted that coming to the session has made them get out and meet new people, with the visitor having "really enjoyed" the Warm Space offering.

Support with experience of trauma

6.24 The evidence further highlighted the positive impact that attending the Warm Spaces could have on visitor's views of others. Some visitors to the spaces had been through significant traumas, including homelessness, bereavement, or ill health. One visitor

noted how seeing others supporting each other had helped them rebuild some faith and hope in the world again after a traumatic life event.

Support with experience of grief

- 6.25 The evaluation highlighted the role that the Warm Spaces can play in supporting those going through grief. Discussions with Warm Space visitors and staff indicated that a considerable number of those who attend the Warm Space are experiencing some form of grief. The older people at Warm Spaces can support and empathise with one another about the loss of their partner and friends.

Increased resilience

- 6.26 Feedback from visitors of the Warm Space indicated that attending the Warm Space significantly contributed to rebuilding their confidence, particularly following the social and emotional challenges brought on by COVID-19 and isolation.
- 6.27 A volunteer highlighted a case where a visitor became more talkative due to their participation in the Warm Space activities.
- 6.28 Additionally, a staff member from another Warm Space shared a success story of a visitor who progressed from being non-verbal at the outset to verbal after regular attendance.
- 6.29 Furthermore, another Warm Space facilitated visitors in gaining confidence to use the train, which positively impacted their mental wellbeing by fostering a sense of independence and reducing feelings of isolation. The 'Try the Train' project run by Bolton Wanderers in partnership with Avanti offered free travel and journey planning to Warm Space visitors. After the session, one visitor commented that "today has been the highlight of my week, I have been able to come out and socialise, while gaining valuable knowledge, and I have been supported to experience journey planning and using the trains to visit new places."

Improved childhood development

- 6.30 The evidence from the surveys and visits suggest that these spaces offer an opportunity for children attending with their families to feel part of a community, helping them to develop a positive outlook on the world.
- 6.31 Children can interact with other children at the spaces, which helps them to make friends or learn how to share which can have holistic benefits for a child that can have ripple effects throughout their life.
- 6.32 One Warm Space parent commented that their child is becoming more confident because of the Warm Space. Another parent noted that the "*people at the Warm Space are our child's extended family*".

Improved physical health

- 6.33 The evidence from the evaluation is that the Warm Spaces improve physical health in a variety of ways:

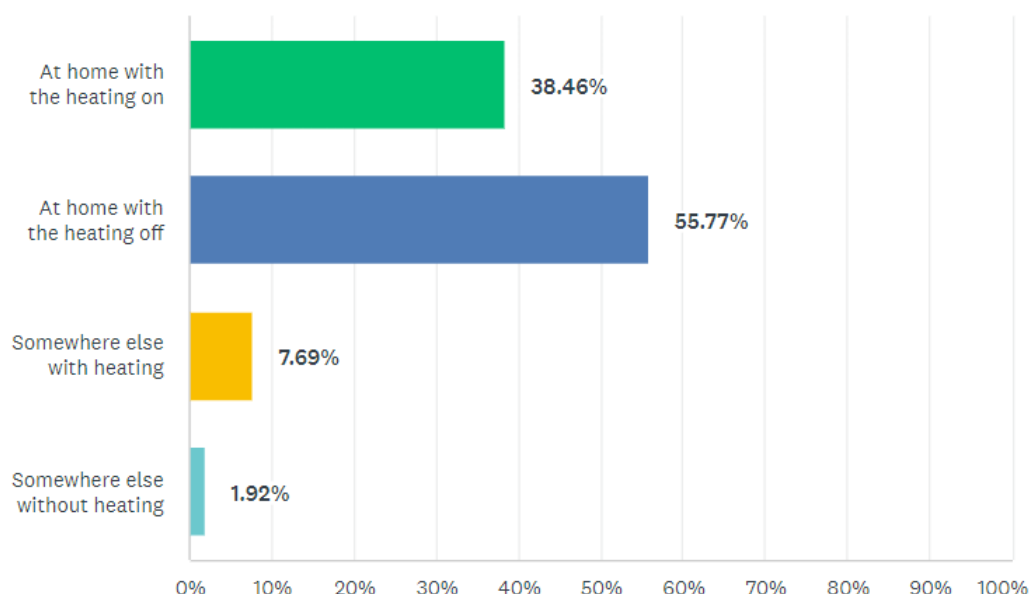
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- Providing a warm space to be outside of the home
- Providing warmth in the home
- Increased physical activity
- Improved healthy eating/nutrition

Providing a warm space outside of the home

- 6.34 The survey highlighted the critical role Warm Spaces play in providing a heated environment for individuals who might otherwise endure cold conditions at home, potentially leading to various health issues.
- 6.35 According to the survey results, the majority (56%) of respondents would otherwise be at home with the heating off if they were not at a Warm Space.
- 6.36 The qualitative research highlighted that being able to go somewhere warm in the colder months is seen as a notable benefit for Warm Space visitors. Visitors at the Warm Space report that they are not "*shivering at home*".
- 6.37 This can lead to a range of physical health benefits as it prevents potential illnesses that might be caused by spending a lot of time in the cold.

Figure 20. Warm Space visitor survey – Where would you normally be if you were not at the Warm Space?



Providing a warmth within the home

- 6.38 Conversations with the Warm Space visitors revealed that Warm Pack items such as electric blankets, draft excluders, slow cookers, air fryers, socks and gloves help to provide warmth, and the physical benefits that come with it. One Warm Space visitor noted that the electric blanket "has helped alleviate chronic pain".
- 6.39 Electric blankets offer targeted warmth, helping users stay warm without the need to heat an entire living space. This is particularly beneficial for maintaining a comfortable body temperature during sleep, contributing to better rest and recovery, which is

essential for physical health. Draft excluders help in reducing drafts and maintaining a stable, warm indoor environment. A consistently warm home environment reduces the risk of cold-related illnesses and improves overall comfort. The evidence highlights how the Warm Packs were supporting visitors to stay warm, with one Warm Space being able to offer sleeping bags to visitors who slept in tents.

- 6.40 Additionally, items like slow cookers and air fryers can help to make meal preparation easier, which can empower the visitors to make healthy home-cooked meals, all of which are vital components of physical health. Socks and gloves provided with Warm Packs help keep extremities warm, crucial for maintaining overall body temperature and preventing conditions like frostbite and chilblains, especially in cold weather. Warm extremities improve comfort and enable users to stay active without the distraction of cold discomfort.

Increased physical activity

- 6.41 The survey results show that 38.5% of respondents reported a positive increase in their physical activity levels after attending the Warm Space, while others noted no change. Increase in physical activity among respondents indicates that Warm Spaces have the potential to encourage movement and participation in various activities. This can be attributed to the availability of recreational and social activities, such as crafts, games, and group exercises. One visitor felt that playing volleyball at the Warm Space they attended helped ease their stiff joints and knees because of the little movements they were making.
- 6.42 Regular physical activity has numerous health benefits, including improved cardiovascular health, better muscle and joint function, and enhanced mood and energy levels which promote an active lifestyle.⁴
- 6.43 Observations during visits to Warm Spaces revealed significant physical benefits for children. These spaces offer opportunities for children to engage in physical activities, allowing them to run around and burn energy. Such exercise provides a range of physical and mental health benefits, crucial for both adults and children.
- 6.44 Staff at Play Place at Queen Adelaide Community Centre commented on the range of sporting activities they offer for young people, including resident led Saturday boxing groups and an outside football club run by a youth worker.

Improved healthy eating

- 6.45 Qualitative research highlights that during the Warm Space sessions in which visitors learn cooking skills, there are notable benefits for physical health. The evidence highlighted that these sessions build visitors' confidence to try new recipes at home, leading to the consumption of fewer ultra-processed foods. One visitor commented

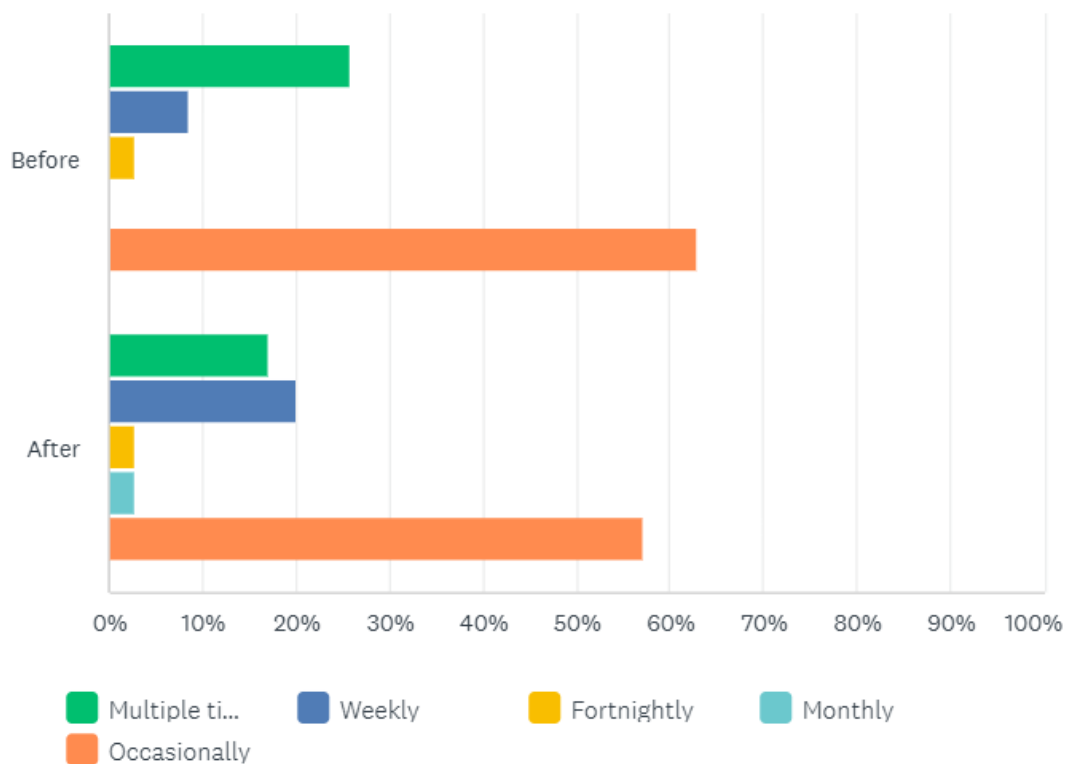
⁴ Miller, K.R., McClave, S.A., Jampolis, M.B. et al. (2016). The Health Benefits of Exercise and Physical Activity. *Curr Nutr Rep* 5, 204–212. Available at: [The Health Benefits of Exercise and Physical Activity | Current Nutrition Reports \(springer.com\)](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12689-016-0181-1)

that the sessions had helped them to learn about healthy cooking and appreciated that they also targeted health conditions such as diabetes.

6.46 Additionally, meals provided by Warm Spaces are typically well-rounded, including a balanced mix of protein, carbohydrates, and vegetables, which support overall health. A staff member observed that the demand for food-based provisions is significant and noted an increase in people with acute needs compared to 5 or 6 years ago.

6.47 The survey evidence also highlights a reduction in the number of people skipping meals regularly, with the percentage of people skipping meals multiple times a week reducing from 25.71% before to 17.14% after attending the Warm Space. The figure below illustrates visitors' responses to the question of how often they skipped meals, both before and after attending the space.

Figure 21. Warm Space visitor survey - How often did/do you have smaller or skipped meals before and after coming to the Warm Space?



Case Studies

6.48 The following are a collection of case studies that describe in more detail the benefits experienced by visitors attending the Warm Spaces.

The Royals, Rainham, Essex

The Royals Warm Space in Rainham provides people with a free meal one day a week and an opportunity to socialise and meet new people. A genuine feeling of community and support thrives at the Warm Space, where the staff takes a hands-on approach to ensure maximum warmth and welcome. One couple, attending weekly with their child, have significantly benefitted from the Warm Space, highlighting its unmatched sense of community. They comment, *"It's so helpful, what would I do without it?"* Visitor X came with their partner after experiencing a significant trauma. By providing a supportive community space, the Warm Space aided in slowly rebuilding X's confidence in reintegrating into the outside world again. Regular attendance helped them manage anxiety and return to work. Talking to others at the space proved immensely beneficial for both X and partner, offering a shared outlet for their difficulties. The space supported the couple by providing solace in others, as well as each other. Additionally, the toys provided entertained their child effectively and the community fostered a sense of extended family for the child.

Colebrook/William Sutton Memorial Hall, Plymouth

At the Warm Space run by Colebrook at William Sutton Memorial Hall in Plymouth, it was clear how valuable the Warm Space was in supporting the social wellbeing of its users. One user in Plymouth noted that they *"only go out because of the Warm Space"*. In addition, Warm Space users benefitted from free weekly cooking sessions. In these sessions, users experimented with cooking something new every week. Users noted that they valued the free food that these sessions provided, with taking food home creating opportunity for family bonding. Unfortunately, not everyone was able to access the Warm Packs. However, some users benefitted from the slow cookers, and had enjoyed making their own bread. Plymouth may benefit from more anti-damp and mould items due to the regional climate.

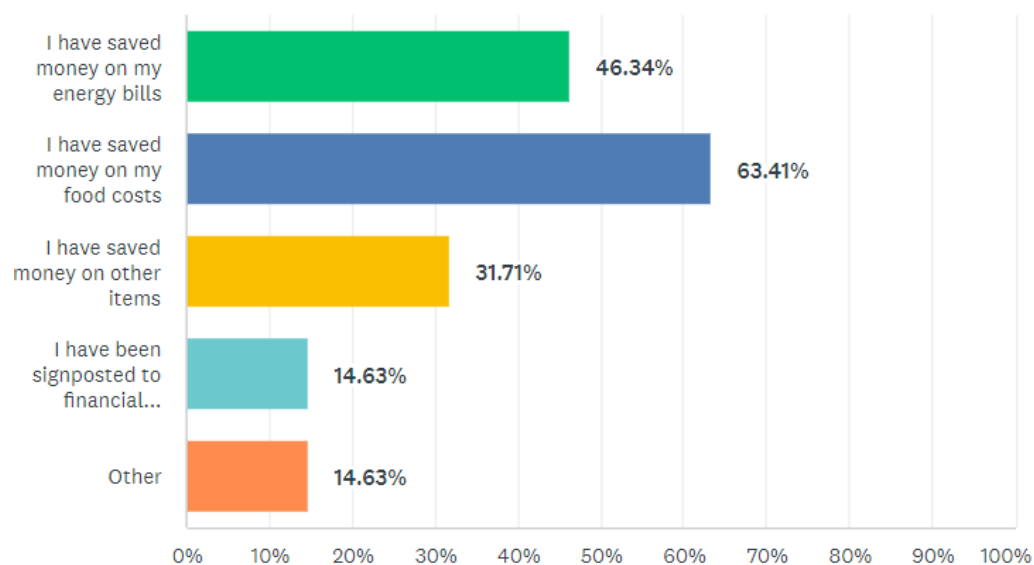
Topic: Grief

The supportive nature of the Warm Spaces offers an opportunity for those who are grieving to connect with others who might be experiencing the same. At one Warm Space in particular, the community came together to support a family who had recently lost their child in a tragic accident. The space was open and ready to support the family when they had nowhere else to go, and when they needed to lean on others for support. The Warm Space extended its hours to support the family and community in a time of need.

Financial impacts for visitors to the Warm Space and recipients of the Warm Packs

- 6.49 The evidence from the evaluation indicates that whilst the social benefits experienced by participants are potentially more obvious, the Warm Space programme is providing financial benefits and reducing the burden of the cost of living for many participants in the following ways:
- Saving money on food costs
 - Saving money on energy bills
 - Saving money on other items
 - Signposting to financial services
 - Saving money on children's activities
- 6.50 The evidence from the survey demonstrates that attending the Warm Space and receiving a Warm Pack has helped people financially. The most significant financial impact, experienced by 64% of participants, is reducing the amount participants spend on food. For nearly half of participants (46%) attending the Warm Space has meant they have saved on energy bills. One Warm Space visitor commented that the Warm Space has "provided when finances have run low, and cupboards are bare".
- 6.51 A lesser financial impact is linked to the money saved on other items (31% said this) and for 15% being signposted to financial advice or support services has helped them financially.
- 6.52 The evidence from the qualitative research with visitors and Warm Space partners supports these survey findings. This section provides a summary of evidence in relation to these financial benefits.

Figure 22. Warm Space visitor survey - Has coming to the Warm Space helped you financially? (select all that apply)



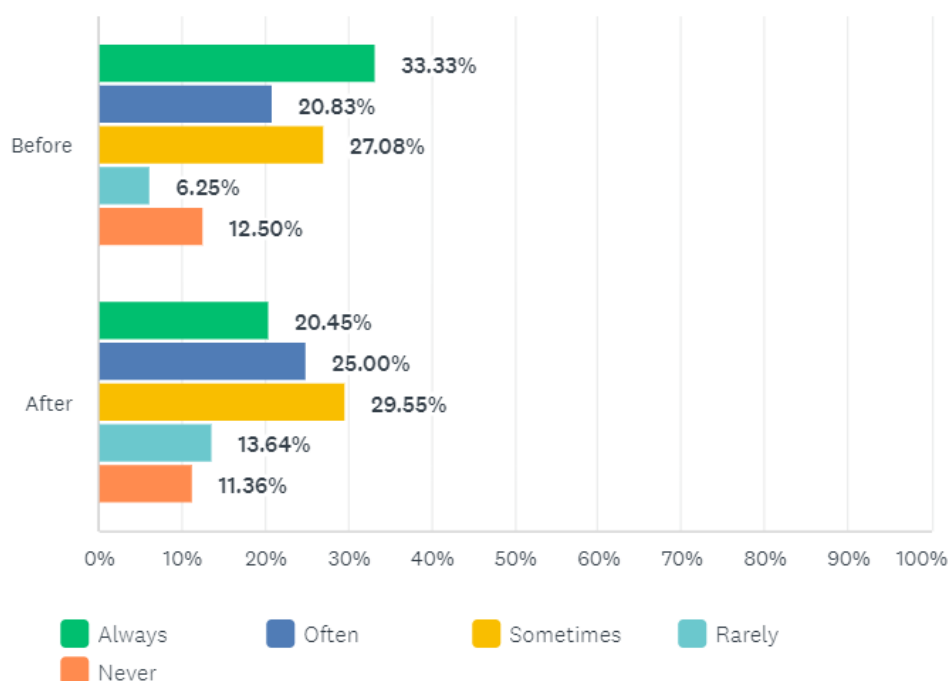
Saving money on food costs

- 6.53 The survey with Warm Space partners identified that 95% offer free food and drink at Warm Space sessions. Some Warm Spaces provide a free cooked lunch for visitors. It is therefore not surprising that for 64% of participants, attending the Warm Space has meant they have saved money on food costs.
- 6.54 The qualitative research with Warm Space participants indicated that the availability of free food and drink, and particularly a cooked lunch, is not only a draw but also means that participants save money on these items because they are not purchasing them themselves.
- 6.55 The qualitative research with Warm Space partners demonstrated that where free cooked lunches were provided at a session, staff also explained how they had made cost savings in the meals, providing inspiration for how visitors can make savings at home. This is considered by participants to also contribute to savings on food following their visit to the Warm Space as they learn more about efficient ways of cooking meals.
- 6.56 At the Warm Space in Selsey, £500 of their Warm Space grant went towards keeping the Food Hub open. Conversations with Warm Space partners indicate that the Food Hub offers invaluable support for people who may otherwise be without. Another Warm Space receives a stock of frozen meals from The Felix Project that people can take if needed. The qualitative research with participants indicates that accessing the food hub/bank enables them to save money.
- 6.57 At the Sutton Centre in Bradford, food is offered to visitors on Mondays. Whilst serving food, Warm Space partners share information on where to buy affordable local produce. This is considered by partners to help visitors save money on food.

Saving money on energy bills

- 6.58 From the qualitative study conducted, it was observed that Warm Spaces have the potential to help visitors save money on energy bills by providing spaces where they can stay warm without incurring heating costs, as well as offering access to other energy-using devices and appliances. For instance, at William Morris Big Local's Community Living Room in North East London, visitors can access the Warm Space for up to 10 hours a week. This access translates to potential savings from avoided heating bills for those 10 hours.
- 6.59 Other services provided by Warm Spaces that suggest that they are likely to support visitors to save on energy bills are, access to free Wi-Fi (76.47%), computer access (23.53%) and charging stations (29.41%). Crafts, games, and recreational activities (100%) offer free entertainment options.
- 6.60 Catbytes Warm Space is making use of free data from the National Databank so as to supply internet to the whole building. This is an example of where visitors can save money on Wi-Fi costs as a result of attending the Warm Space.
- 6.61 The evidence from the evaluation indicates that Warm Spaces are to some extent helping participants save money on their energy bills however this isn't the primary reason that people use the Warm Space. For 20% of survey respondents, they come to the Warm Space to be physically warm, but the majority (76%) come to socialise. However, as previously mentioned, nearly half of survey participants (46%) felt that they had saved money on bills by attending the Warm Space. The survey data demonstrates a significant decrease of 13% in the number of people who are "Always" worried about energy bills, suggesting that access to the Warm Space has alleviated the constant worry about energy bills for many participants.
- 6.62 The increase in the number of people that are "Often" and "Sometimes" worried about energy bills since coming to the Warm Space indicates that while fewer participants are constantly worried, more of them experience moderate levels of worry. This suggests a redistribution of worry frequency rather than its complete elimination.
- 6.63 The increase in the number of people that are "Rarely" worried shows that a notable portion of participants experience less frequent worry after coming to the Warm Space. Overall, the survey data indicates that attending a Warm Space seems to have a positive impact by reducing the intensity of worry about energy bills among participants.

Figure 23. Warm Space visitor survey - How often were/are you worried about energy bills before and after coming to the Warm Space?



6.64 The survey also asked participants where they would be if they weren't at the Warm Space. Nearly 38.46% of participants said they would be at home with the heating on, potentially supporting the reasons why some survey participants feel less worried about energy bills since visiting the space as they aren't at home using energy. (See Figure 20)

6.65 The qualitative research with visitors indicated that saving money on energy bills was not the biggest draw for using the Warm Space, in many cases visitors hadn't considered accessing the Warm Space as potentially saving them money on energy bills. However, when visitors stopped to consider the savings, they were broadly in agreement that they were likely to have saved money on their energy bills. This was mainly due to not putting the heating on or using devices at home. Some visitors commented that Warm Pack contents would save them money on their electricity bills.

Saving money on other items

6.66 There is evidence that the Warm Space programme is helping people to save money on other items.

6.67 Crucially, the Warm Spaces also distributed Warm Packs to visitors which provided visitors with essential items to help them save money while keeping warm at home.

6.68 The survey with Warm Space visitors indicated a degree of variation in the items that are considered beneficial. The most beneficial item was the slow cooker with nearly 60% of visitors saying these were beneficial. Nearly 45% of visitors also found that

electric blankets were beneficial and 30% saw benefit to the room thermostats and 25.93% draft excluders. The least beneficial items were scarfs and gloves.

6.69 Interestingly, the Warm Space partners survey suggested a greater degree of consistency amongst items that are considered beneficial. The differences in popularity between staff and visitors for certain items like gloves and socks may indicate a difference in perspective about what is the most important. The qualitative research with visitors reflects the findings in the survey, but additional items were recommended, such as sleeping bags, and children's items like nappies, clothing, and toys.

Figure 24. Warm Space partner staff survey - Which of these items from the Warm Pack do participants find the most popular/most beneficial?

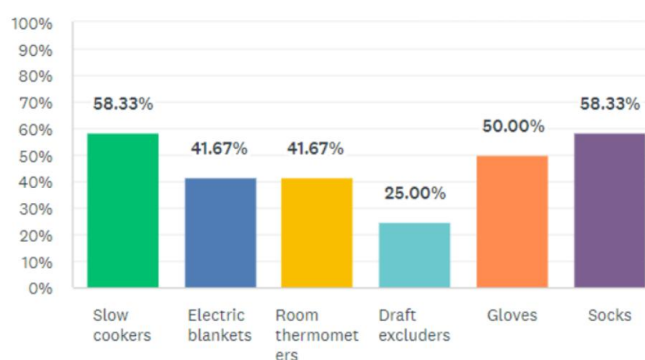
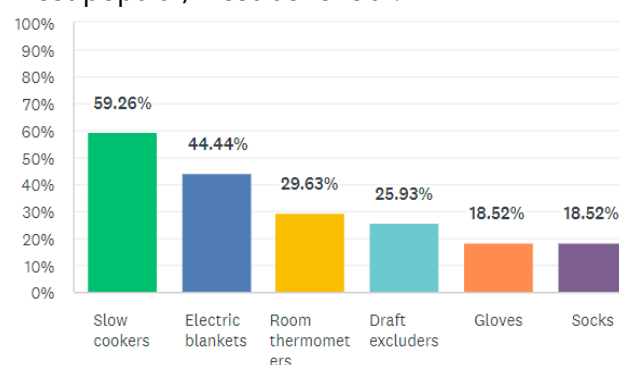


Figure 25. Warm Space Visitor Survey - Which of these items from the Warm Pack do you find the most popular/most beneficial?



6.70 The survey evidence indicated that people receiving a Warm Pack find them to have financial benefits. One respondent stated, "they save me money and help so much", another shared "the draft excluders are amazing" and "the slow cooker has helped so much with the electric as it's cheaper than the oven".

6.71 In the staff survey, one respondent noted that the "electric blankets had helped a lot of people who struggled to pay for heating". One further comment highlighted how the packs helped during the peak of the Cost-of-Living crisis, writing that they "came at a time when heating was expensive and had increased. It was a moment of relief to have help".

6.72 One Warm Space shared that they had distributed their surplus Warm Packs to families who were attending an after-school club at the community centre, highlighting how the Warm Packs can have far reaching benefits in the community.

6.73 The survey suggests that there are no significant differences between the Warm Spaces visited in terms of Warm Pack item preferences.

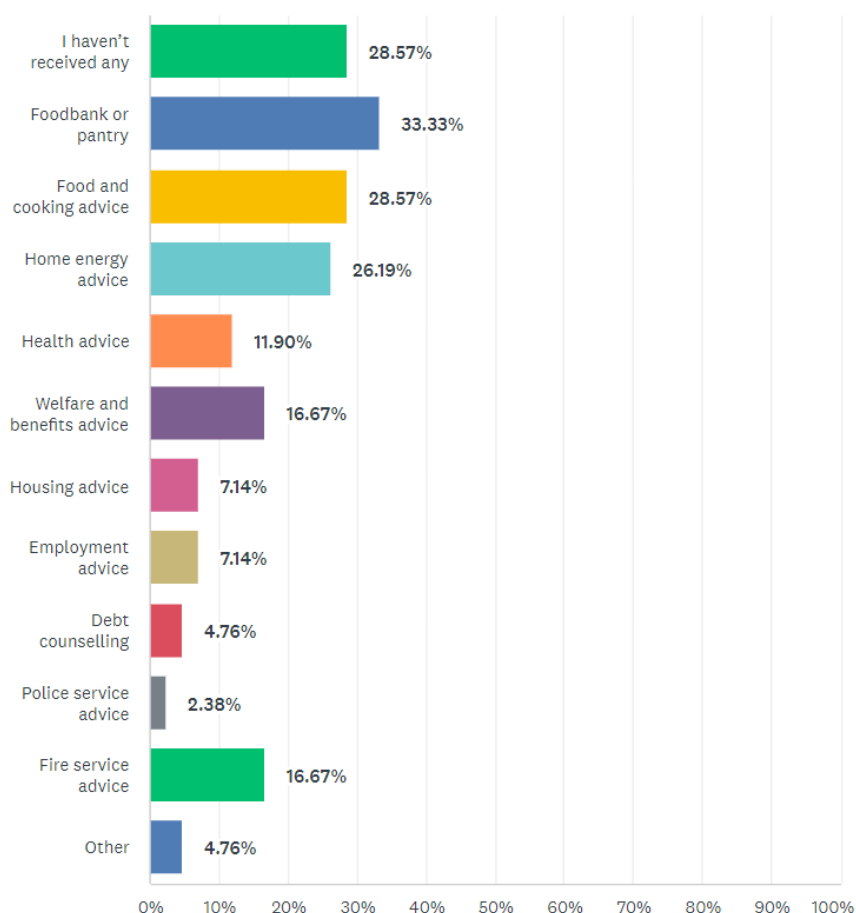
Signposting to financial and support services

6.74 The evaluation indicated that the signposting activity provided by staff had financial benefits to visitors. Most Warm Space staff have the local knowledge and connections

that enable them to connect visitors with other services if needed. Warm Spaces connect visitors with food vouchers; cost of living support, budgeting support, employment support, homeless support, benefits advice and energy companies such as Cadent energy. One Warm Space had a partnership with the National Energy foundation. The evidence highlighted that one space was able to tap into Clarion staff for budgeting support and cooking sessions. In addition, the Riverside Centre in Sutton signposts visitors from low-income families to discounts on their water bills.

- 6.75 The discussions indicate that charities can also offer support to the groups, although visitors appreciate when charities integrate themselves into the group, rather than lecturing or sitting at information stands. Warm Spaces can also offer further general financial advice from a range of external groups.
- 6.76 From the visitor's survey, it is evident that a significant proportion of respondents have received advice and guidance related to financial support services. Approximately 33.33% have utilised food banks or pantries, which can provide crucial assistance in meeting basic nutritional needs during times of financial hardship. Additionally, 28.57% have received food and cooking advice, which can help individuals stretch their budgets by preparing cost-effective meals. Furthermore, services like housing advice (7.14%), employment advice (7.14%), welfare and benefits advice (16.67%), and debt counselling (4.76%) can play a vital role in helping individuals manage their finances, access available government assistance programmes, and navigate financial challenges.
- 6.77 By providing information and guidance on these topics, organisations can empower individuals to make informed decisions, reduce their financial burdens, and potentially improve their overall financial stability. The below figure illustrates the proportion of respondents that received guidance on different categories.

Figure 26. Warm Space visitor survey – What information, advice, and guidance have you received? (select all that apply)



Savings on children's activities

- 6.78 Some Warm Spaces also acted as a form of informal childcare support, where visitors could have some extra support looking after kids. There may be potential cost savings here where instead visitors would need to pay for some childcare support.
- 6.79 Stay & Play in Sutton offered its session for free, where other kids clubs can charge around £5 per child.
- 6.80 Some Warm Spaces are also able to offer trips out in the community. The Sutton Centre in Bradford was able to pay for a family with 8 kids, as well as other visitors, to go to a local trampoline park at the end of the Warm Space programme. This is not something that the family might have been able to do otherwise due to it being too expensive for that many people.

7. The impact of the Warm Space programme on community and associated assets

7.01 This section provides a response to research question 3, it highlights the impacts of the Warm Space programme for community and associated assets.

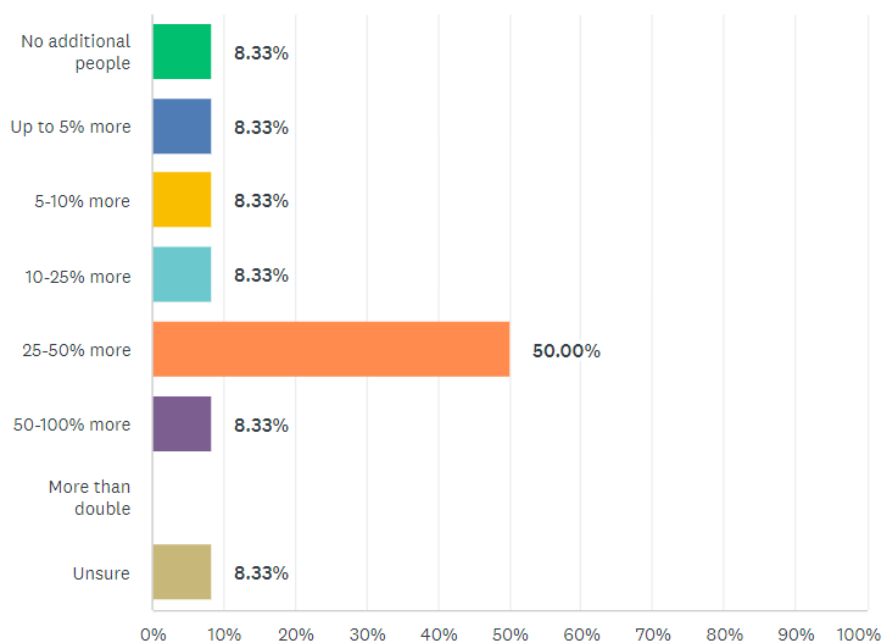
Increased footfall

7.02 The evaluation involved speaking with Warm Space partners at community and associated assets about the impact that being involved in the Warm Space has had on these spaces.

7.03 The evidence suggests that since opening as a Warm Space, community and associated assets have experienced an increase in the number of people using the spaces.

7.04 Half of Warm Space partners responding to the survey reported a 25-50% increase in the number of people attending the community/associated assets since becoming a Warm Space. Only a minority stated that there was no increase in footfall at all. This increase indicates that the Warm Space programme has drawn more people to attend the community/associated assets.

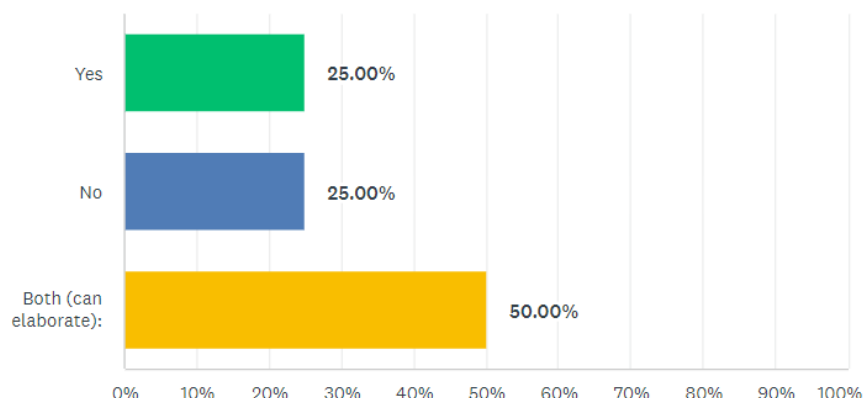
Figure 27. Warm Space partner staff survey - How many additional attendees do you think you are getting because you are part of the Clarion Futures Warm Spaces programme?



7.05 50% of the Warm Space partners consider that both regular attendees and new visitors are coming to the Warm Space.

7.06 The qualitative research with partners suggests that this blend of familiar faces and newcomers enhances the community dynamics by fostering new connections and strengthening existing ones.

Figure 28. Warm Space partner staff survey - Are the people who attend your space typically those who already regularly attend/use your centre?



7.07 The evidence with Warm Space partners indicates that the increase in footfall at the community/associated assets has meant that they have been able to support more people through the other activities provided at the community/associated asset. At RMUK Wellbeing Warm Space, staff note that they “have seen an increase in some of the other activities at the hub, such as exercise and walking groups”.

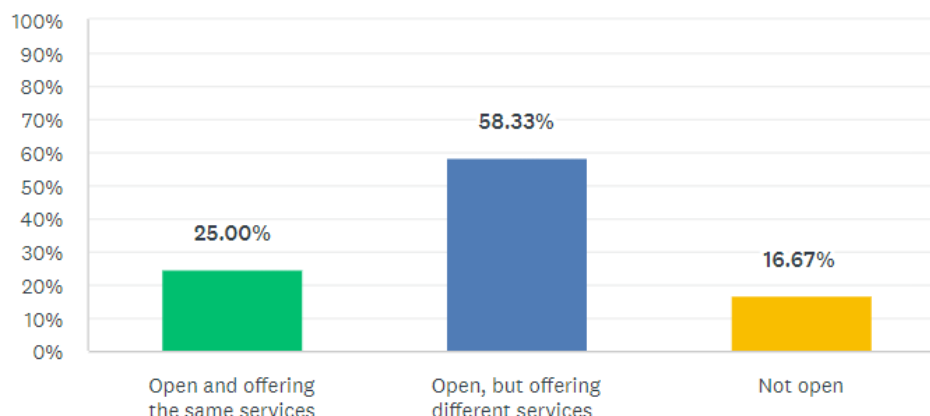
7.08 It was shared that the Warm Space programme has been a good way of raising the profile of the range of activities provided by the assets. Some partners indicated that having an increase in attendees increased donations, funding opportunities, and spending in associated facilities like cafes or shops within the community centres.

Impact on the type of support that Warm Spaces provided

7.09 The evidence suggests that without the Warm Space funding, the majority of community and/or associated assets wouldn't be running as a Warm Space, but they would still be open.

7.10 17% of community and/or associated assets stated that they would have had to close if they had not received Warm Space funding. Whilst this is a minority it isn't an insignificant amount given the benefits highlighted to the local community above.

Figure 29. Warm Space partner staff survey - If Clarion Futures hadn't intervened, would you still be open?



Increased reputation of community and/or associated assets in the local community

- 7.11 The evaluation highlighted that, since becoming a Warm Space, the reputation of the community and/or associated assets in the local area have increased, 75% of Warm Space partners consider their reputation locally to have improved. (See Figure 1)
- 7.12 The qualitative research with Warm Space partners suggests that the Warm Space programme has created greater trust and connection between the asset and the local community.

Increase in volunteers and improved sense for purpose amongst volunteers

- 7.13 The Warm Space partner survey indicated that since become a Warm Space 50% assets have seen an increase in the number of people volunteering at the asset.
- 7.14 The qualitative research demonstrates that volunteering at the Warm Spaces has positive benefits on their mental health. Volunteers report having a greater sense of purpose as well as benefitting from the social interaction and routine.

Social impact of volunteering

- 7.15 During 2023/24, 296 people volunteered 8,535 hours of their time at Warm Spaces. The social impact of volunteering has been estimated using a method from Befriending Networks⁵.
- 7.16 The Befriending Networks report uses the average median wage rate to estimate an economic value per hour of volunteering, The average median wage of £16.20 per hour has been derived from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)⁶.
- 7.17 Based on 8535 hours of volunteering provided by people at Warm Spaces for 2023/24 the value of volunteering hours has been estimated to be £138,267 per annum.

⁵ Befriending Networks (2023). Befriending Statistics Report. Available at: [Resources — Befriending Networks](#)

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2024). Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). Available at: [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\) - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

8. The impact of the Warm Space programme for Clarion Housing

8.01 This section provides additional response to research question 3.

Potential savings for Clarion Housing residents increased ability to maintain tenancies

8.02 Clarion Futures funded Clarion Housing community/associated assets that provide the Warm Spaces are in areas with a large proportion of Clarion Housing residents living nearby.

8.03 The evidence from the engagement with Warm Space partners and visitors has indicated a range of financial benefits for visitors because of attending the Warm Spaces and receiving a Warm Pack (see financial benefits section above).

8.04 This is considered by some Warm Space partners to have supported visitors (including Clarion Housing residents) to maintain their tenancies, particularly for those that are in financial hardship and that have been struggling more during the cost-of-living crisis.

8.05 Amongst some of the visitors, including those with Clarion Housing as a landlord, the evidence from the engagement is that the financial benefits have, in some cases, supported them to avoid rent arrears.

8.06 Supporting residents financially has the potential to have a knock-on financial benefit for Clarion Housing Group from residents that can afford their rent and maintain their tenancies.

Perception of Clarion Housing within the community

8.07 Although not the primary goal of the Warm Space programme, the evaluation sought to understand whether the local community's perception of Clarion Housing Group had been impacted by Clarion Futures' involvement.

8.08 The evidence from the engagement work suggested that there are mixed views towards Clarion Housing Group amongst members of the local community, whilst some people hold more negative views, others are neutral, and some have a more positive perception.

8.09 Many Warm Space visitors were not aware that Clarion Housing are funding the Warm Spaces or owned the community assets. Therefore, the perception of Clarion Housing has remained relatively unchanged because of the Warm Space programme. There is potential scope for Clarion Housing to advertise their involvement in the Warm Space programme further, however this should be carefully considered to not appear patronising.

8.10 The staff survey results illustrate that Clarion Housing's funding and branding are highly valued and have a substantial positive impact on the Warm Spaces programme. The resources, micro-grants, branding efforts, and effective communication provided

by Clarion Futures have enabled organisations to enhance their services, attract more attendees, and extend their activities. This support not only improves the quality of services offered but also ensures that the Warm Spaces can continue to meet the needs of the community effectively.

9. Summary and Conclusion

- 9.01 This section of the report provides a summary conclusion for the evaluation findings.
- 9.02 This evaluation report for Clarion Futures has sought to address the three evaluation aims as set out in the proposal. These are:
1. To evaluate the service's operational components, highlighting areas for enhancement and improvement.
 2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community, for the following age groups <55, 55-65 and 65+.
 3. To evaluate the social and financial impact of the Warm Space programme.
- 9.03 The summary conclusion has been divided into a summary/conclusion for these three research aims.

The evaluation of the Warm Space programme's operational components

Warm Spaces

- 9.04 Overall, the evidence from the evaluation indicates that the operational processes are working well. This means that the Warm Space programme is effectively supporting people in the community and is considered valuable and essential by stakeholders.
- 9.05 All respondents in the Warm Space partner survey (100%) expressed a desire to be involved again if the Clarion Futures Warm Spaces programme runs next winter, indicating strong support and perceived value of the initiative.
- 9.06 The operational strengths of the Warm Space programme are derived from the skills and local intelligence of Clarion Futures internal staff and Warm Space partners who know and understand their communities well. This enables the programme to adapt and respond to community needs. The programme has also successfully upskilled Warm Space partners with support from the Clarion Futures internal team.
- 9.07 The operational groups, such as the Working Group and panel have been working well to deliver 53 successful Warm Spaces. Additional strengths of the programme come from building knowledge exchange across Clarion Housing teams. Given the scale of the programme, it has been quick to mobilise and has benefitted from pre-existing grant processes.

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

- 9.08 Like any new programme it was not without its challenges. One significant issue is the lengthy onboarding process for some new partners, which contrasts with the quick onboarding for others. Additionally, the £5,000 grants, while helpful, are not seen as transformative, and building a Warm Space in less established areas takes time.
- 9.09 There were also practical challenges for visitors, particularly older individuals, who find it difficult to leave their homes in cold weather. Managing visitors with complex needs has also been challenging, with 30% of partners citing this as a barrier to delivering the Warm Space.
- 9.10 Furthermore, there has been confusion about the specific activities that constitute a Warm Space, and the increased workload for Clarion Futures staff has been difficult to manage alongside their other responsibilities.
- 9.11 The evaluation identified a range of opportunities for growing the success of the Warm Spaces. The evidence suggests that there is scope and demand for a year-round programme that broadens the definition of 'warmth' to include the warmth received from socialising with others, this was the biggest draw of the current Warm Spaces. Consideration should be given as to the marketing and advertising of these spaces as possible 'Wellbeing Spaces'.
- 9.12 There is also potential to recognise and reward the effort of Warm Space partners, perhaps through an award ceremony/certificate.
- 9.13 There is also scope to further engage with other local community groups, including those representing ethnic minority groups. Creating a culturally competent service would encourage a more diverse range of visitors.
- 9.14 There is room for growth in streamlining the grants funding to reduce the administrative burden for partners and to strengthen the Warm Space working group, by including representation from other Clarion Housing teams.
- 9.15 Finally, the evaluation identifies a few potential threats that are worth considering. These include the limited capacity of Warm Space partners, linked to this the difficulties with volunteer recruitment, although the Warm Space has somewhat increased the number of volunteers.
- 9.16 In conclusion, Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces programme exhibits several strengths that contribute to its success and suggest that it should become part of Clarion Futures' 'core' offer. The identified weaknesses/challenges offering opportunities for improvement and development for next year. The programme's adaptability and responsiveness to challenges will be crucial for sustained growth and effectiveness in supporting communities.

Warm Packs

- 9.17 Overall, the evidence from the evaluation is that the Warm Packs are beneficial to the Warm Space programme. Strengths lie in the adaptability of staff/partners throughout the management of the Warm Packs. Clarion Futures staff were supportive of partners

who were struggling with storage space or distribution issues. In addition, the administrative support offered by the Clarion Futures team supported what was quite a time consuming and complex process.

- 9.18 The evaluation identified weaknesses and challenges, especially concerning Warm Pack administration. Warm Space partners felt that data reporting and ordering processes could be time consuming. There were also practical challenges for the Warm Space partners, including issues with storage and transporting items to visitors. In addition, there were challenges in communicating the Warm Pack offering effectively to Warm Space partners.
- 9.19 Opportunities for growth include relieving the administrative burden of the Warm Packs for partners, sending items directly to visitors, rebranding the Warm Packs, and reviewing what items should be included in the Warm Pack offering, with sleeping bags and children's items suggested.
- 9.20 The evaluation identifies that the administrative burden of the Warm Packs is a potential threat to the Warm Pack programme, as it may prevent some partners from getting involved in the Warm Pack process again. In addition, Clarion Futures staff were concerned that because some people will have already accessed the Warm Packs, there may be less need for them in future years.
- 9.21 In conclusion, despite the logistical challenges experienced distributing the Warm Packs preventing the target being met, the Clarion Futures staff and partners worked hard to manage the process. The Warm Pack process will benefit from the learning from the last year and clearer roles and responsibilities of the Clarion Futures staff vs Warm Space partners.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the Warm Space programme in providing support to people in the community

- 9.22 The evaluation of the Warm Space programme indicated that it was effective in providing support to people in the community, particularly in relation to social support.
- 9.23 The Warm Spaces saw a significant increase in footfall between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Between October 2023 and April 2024 footfall reached 43,691 visits across 53 Warm Spaces, with an estimated 4,836 unique visits. An increase from a footfall of c.10,000 the year before with an estimated 1,069 unique visits across the 8 months it was open.
- 9.24 The profile of people attending Warm Spaces tends to be people over the age of 55, however, some Warm Spaces are primarily focused on supporting young people. Warm Spaces predominantly provide support to 'vulnerable' people in the community.
- 9.25 The evaluation indicated that visitors attend the Warm Spaces regularly with most attending weekly or multiple times a week. The repeated use of the Warm Spaces

amongst visitors demonstrates how much the Warm Spaces are valued as visitors keep returning. The qualitative research highlighted that visitors return to Warm Spaces because they consider Warm Spaces to be safe, non-judgmental and inclusive spaces where they feel well supported. One visitor, who had severe Parkinsons, noted that "I've never felt welcome going to other groups, but I love it here!"

- 9.26 The effectiveness of Warm Spaces in providing social support is well evidenced. The visitor survey indicated that 77% of attendees use Warm Spaces to socialise, indicating the success of companionship and conversation services provided by 94% of Warm Spaces. (see Figure 14)
- 9.27 Warm Spaces also sought to provide warmth over the winter months. 50% of visitors report that they like that the Warm Space provides somewhere warm for them to be. This suggests that for at least half of visitors, the Warm Spaces are supporting them to keep warm during the winter months.

The evaluation of the social and financial impacts of the Warm Space programme

- 9.28 The evaluation of the Warm Space programme identified a variety of social and financial benefits for a range of stakeholders.
- 9.29 In relation to the Warm Space visitors, the evidence indicated that attending the Warm Spaces had substantial social impact. The evaluation demonstrated that the primary reason that people attend the Warm Space is to socialise with others and by attending the Warm Space it had reduced the instances of social isolation and loneliness amongst attendees.
- 9.30 There are also numerous benefits to visitors' mental health with reported increases in visitors sense of purpose and optimism about life. The Warm Spaces also provide safe spaces for people that have experience of trauma, grief and anxiety to receive support and overcome these experiences.
- 9.31 The physical health of visitors has also improved because of attending the Warm Space. Providing somewhere warm to be outside of the home, and free items to help people stay warm at home, has had positive impacts on physical health. As a result of financial savings and the availability of various services at the Warm Space, the incidence of people skipping meals has also reduced.
- 9.32 Whilst the social benefits experienced by Warm Space visitors were more significant, the Warm Space programme also provides financial benefits and reduces the burden of the cost of living for many visitors in a variety of ways.
- 9.33 In particular, the majority of visitors reported that they saved money on food costs, as a result of the availability of free food and refreshments provided by Warm Spaces. Nearly half of visitors engaged with indicated that they had also saved money on their

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

energy bills by attending the Warm Space as they were able to avoid using energy at home, as well as from receiving items from the Warm Packs that reduced their energy use.

- 9.34 A key benefit of the Warm Space programme was also the opportunity for visitors to be signposted to other services that can support them with accessing benefits, housing and other financial advice, all of which have the potential to boost their income.
- 9.35 In relation to the community and associated assets, being involved in the Warm Space programme has increased their footfall and the number of new visitors, with an estimated 25-50% increase in the number of people attending the community/associated assets. (see Figure 27)
- 9.36 Whilst most community/associated assets think they would still be open without the Warm Space funding, the funding has supported them to deliver services they wouldn't have otherwise provided.
- 9.37 Community/associated assets reputation in the local community has also improved and they have seen an increase in the number of volunteers.
- 9.38 In relation to the impact for Clarion Housing, the evaluation highlights potential benefits to the organisation from improved social and financial outcomes for residents. For example, there are potential savings when residents are able to maintain their tenancies and avoid falling into rent arrears.
- 9.39 Whilst the perception of Clarion Housing as a landlord hasn't changed greatly since being involved in the Warm Space programme, there is potential scope to demonstrate the impact of the Warm Spaces through soft marketing and be clear about Clarion Housing's involvement.
- 9.40 Overall, the evaluation indicates that the Warm Space programme has had a significant social and financial impacts which support the case for continued funding of the Warm Space programme.

1. Annexe: Summary of the site visits

- This section provides a summary of the site visits.

Colebrook, Plymouth	
Type	Community asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space provides Clarion Housing residents and other visitors the opportunity to connect and form friendships. The space can help to repair the social emotional trauma from events like the pandemic. - There is a different activity on every week – from crafts to cooking. - The Warm Space clearly helps to build the confidence of visitors. - On average, 12 people each week are affected by the Warm Space. - Visitors would rather make a reasonable financial contribution than see the group close. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding goes towards refreshments, resources, and staff funding.
What is working well?	<p>Supportive community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors feel supported by the group and each other. It is a crucial space for their feelings of wellbeing and social connection. - It was felt in this group that there was perhaps more social need than warmth need, with the most valuable type of warmth being the social. - Sessions are often led by the interests of those who attend the space, with their interests and preferences at the heart of the activities. - Staff check up on visitors who sign up for an activity but who don't attend to ensure that they are ok. <p>Help to maintain tenancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some visitors felt that the support they received from the Warm Space helped them to be able to maintain their Clarion Housing tenancies. <p>Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running activities is felt to be important to draw people in. The space offers a different activity each week. <p>Communication with Clarion Futures</p>

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Colebrook, Plymouth	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm Space staff communication with the team at Clarion Futures over the running of the Warm Space was felt to be smooth.
What could be improved?	<p>Warm Space and Pack advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors felt that the space itself was not well advertised, with leaflets through the door being a suggestion to better reach people. - Visitors felt that many people in the community could benefit from the Warm Packs, but that these people were not being reached effectively. Older people may be reached by posting some leaflets through doors. It was felt that the Warm Pack advertising was mostly online. The Warm Space may benefit from some support in reaching those in the community who are known to be hard to get in touch with. - Staff could have been better made aware of the flexibility of the Warm Pack items. People in Plymouth could have benefitted from more wet and damp-based items in the Warm Pack, such as dehumidifiers and other anti-mould and damp items. <p>Warm Space branding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could 'Warm Space' be rebranded to 'Wellbeing Space'? Staff felt that 'Warm Space' can feel heavily stigmatising, especially in Plymouth. <p>Warm Pack availability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Warm Packs were only available during the colder Christmas period. Moving forward, it might be beneficial to ensure there were provisions for a longer period. - Some people did not receive Warm Packs who would have wanted to. <p>Warm Pack administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm Space staff emphasised the importance of starting the Warm Pack administrative processes early. They would like to see Warm Packs in the communities by September so that staff have more time to advertise the available items to visitors. - Staff would like to see Clarion Futures send Warm Pack items direct to visitors; the latter having filled out a Warm Pack application with the visitor's address. <p>Warm Space funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff felt that funding needed to be released earlier, so that Warm Spaces can prepare for the winter and get people signed up. <p>Communications with the Rothesay Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff came into difficulties with the feedback forms, as they didn't know where to send them to. They asked where but after a while they just disposed of the forms. Sometime later, the Rothesay Foundation got in touch with pre stamped

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

Colebrook, Plymouth	
	<p>envelopes to send the forms to. The feedback was that the Rothesay Foundation could have communicated their plans better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff were informed that there was no time limit on applying for Warm Packs, but then later were told that there was a time limit. <p>Warm Space environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors felt that there could be some better provisions to support families and children, such as a child or baby seat in the space. - In addition, visitors felt that the space could be more homely and cosy, perhaps with some more decorations or a few comfier seats. <p>Summer funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff noted that loneliness exists no matter the season and would ideally want to have funding that could cover the whole year, apart from Christmas where other support becomes available. <p>Increasing diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff note that they would like to increase diversity in their spaces. They may benefit from support on how to appeal to a diversifying community. <p>Clarion Housing reputation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors felt that Clarion Housing could do more to communicate with them. The Warm Space visitors had not particularly changed their view on Clarion Housing. Some visitors would like Clarion Housing drop-in sessions, which could involve both practical support and feedback sessions between residents and Clarion Housing.

Selsey Community Forum	
Type	Associated asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Together Time' is the name for the Warm Space. Together Time offers a space for people to go and chat with others in the community. Visitors receive a free homecooked meal and a range of activities are on offer: such as musical bingo or exercising support. It caters mostly for older people in the community. - Some funding goes towards the running of the Food Hub. Food Hub is more than just picking up food, it is a social experience. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £4500 goes to staff costs, for example, catering for Together Time for 6 hours a week.

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £500 went to the Food Hub funding, not so much on the food but on the costs of running the church space while the Food Hub was open. - Funding helps to optimise the Warm Space.
<p>What is working well?</p>	<p>Social benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors felt that the Warm Space was <i>"very beneficial"</i> and <i>"helped them through the winter"</i>. One visitor described it as giving them <i>"a will to live"</i>. - The space offers a chance for companionship and to chat to others who might be experiencing similar things. Visitors can also grow in confidence. - For some, the Warm Space simply gave them somewhere else to go. <p>Financial benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For some people, attending the Warm Space was felt to help with heating bills. <p>Community benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financially supporting the Warm Space has a beneficial ripple effect across the whole community, as people can be signposted to and from the Warm Space from other community groups, including the community Care Shop. <p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Venture bus takes people to the Warm Space if they need it. This is run by the Venture Club which costs the visitor £20 a year.
<p>What could be improved?</p>	<p>Warm Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff felt that there was too much admin associated with applying for the Warm Packs, so did not apply for them. Staff felt that if there was no additional funding to staff this extra admin then they would not have the capacity to do it. - Staff are unsure how much need there is for Warm Packs. - Staff felt that some items were not worth the admin process. Air fryers and slow cookers might be, but the hot water bottles are seen as a cheaper item that might not be worth it. - Staff would want to bring UK Harvest in and pay them to demonstrate how to use the air fryer and slow cooker. They have a partnership with UK Harvest. They are interested to know if Clarion Futures could cover this cost. <p>Target audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff want to reach families with kids who can't afford much. Currently, they are mostly reaching older people. - Staff would ideally like to have laptops to support kids doing homework, as well as offering other types of support. <p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The visitors want more transport to get to the Warm Space. They would like more drivers. <p>Financial benefits</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For some visitors, they did not feel that there was a significant financial benefit to the Warm Space. Views on this may have varied from person to person and depended on an individual's needs. <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some visitors felt that there could be more things to do at the Warm Space, for example, more talks. Others appeared content with the offerings.
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Play Place (Queen Adelaide Court) - Penge	
Type	Community asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space supports those in the surrounding Clarion Housing buildings to connect with others and provide a space to feel comfortable. - The space supports people of all ages through activities. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The funding is generally distributed to support the activities of the community centre. - It may go to food, activities, staff support, etc.
What is working well?	<p>Social benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A place for parents to bring their children, giving them some breathing room, and the kids something to do. - The kids love going and it is good for routine, especially with kids who may have ADHD or Autism. - The space allows young people to get involved in the community and be politically active with youth forums. <p>Warm Packs and provisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The slow cookers/rice cookers were very beneficial. - Food parcels are often very popular. <p>Funding application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff felt that the funding was quite easy to apply to.
What could be improved?	<p>Activity offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The staff would love to have funding for outings and offsite activities. - More funding would also mean provisions for better food and an optimised activity programme.

Bolton Wanderers	
Type	Community asset
Summary	Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 – 20 people attend each week, mostly the same group of people. It is for over 55s and has been built into a previously existing session. - The space runs various activities such as sports games and board games. - The Warm Space session ran for 3 hours a week. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The funding goes to utility bills and Warm Packs.
What is working well?	<p>Warm Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Warm Packs were popular, and people took the items that they felt would be useful to them. - The Warm Packs are the biggest addition that the Warm Space has brought that the previous offering, the Extra Time hub, didn't have. - Staff have found that it is easier to retain members with the Warm Packs, in the sense that it shows the visitors that the centre has the resources to support them. - The space can offer surplus Warm Packs to families in the after-school club, which is supported by different funding. - Staff will help transport the Warm Pack items to visitors if it is needed. <p>Atmosphere and social benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relaxed atmosphere is a positive. - The social benefits of the space are significant: for a lot of people, it is the highlight of their week. People have been able to come out of their shells, and form friendships. <p>Data collection and Clarion Futures communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Clarion Futures reporting process is straightforward, with Clarion Futures contacts being responsive. Staff felt that Clarion Futures took the data they needed and no more, which was positive. <p>Support on offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through Clarion Housing support, they have had a cooking session, cost of living and budgeting support, mental health support and Avanti train support. - The workshop element is successful: Warm Space staff can tap into Clarion Housing staff, who can offer the above sessions. <p>Led by service users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space is ultimately led by the service users. This means that it can cater to the needs of the community and be flexible.
What could be improved?	<p>Maximising financial support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The financial benefits are not massive, but slow cookers can have some impact. Consider: how can financial support be maximised? <p>Clarion Housing reputation</p>

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space tells the participants about Clarion Housing's involvement in the Warm Pack funding, but there is no significant advertising of the partnership with Clarion Housing aside from this. <p>Target audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are more women who attend the space than men. How can the space appeal to more men?
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The Royals - Rainham	
Type	Associated asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free meal one day a week. - Space to socialise, some people might bring in food to share with others. - A space to receive support. - Provides frozen meals from the Felix Trust for people to take if needed. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To go towards some staff and food costs – they pay 2 members of staff. - Warm Space funding pays £25 an hour towards the £40 an hour rent. - The NHS and Clarion Futures fund the Warm Space in the winter, and in the summer, it will be funded by the National Lottery. - £5700 was given by Clarion Futures to the space, an additional £1600 was paid by the community centre towards running the space. The total spend is around £8000, and the overspend came out of the centre's money.
What is working well?	<p>Community and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A genuine feeling of community and support at the Warm Space. - Visitors can be signposted to community groups or resources that might provide further support. - Staff are supportive and friendly. - Informal space is appreciated. - Visitors can be supported with issues including physical and mental health, employment, and housing. <p>Warm Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm Packs have been very beneficial for some visitors. - Flexibility of Warm Packs re. items chosen. Once the centre had given out slow cookers, they gave out air fryers. This was approved by Clarion Futures staff. In addition, they bought sleeping bags for people experiencing homelessness, as draft excluders were not relevant in this scenario. <p>Data collection and Clarion Futures communication</p>

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication with Clarion Futures staff is smooth – it is felt that Clarion Futures only ask for the data that is required for collection and not more, which is appreciated. <p>Lottery funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Clarion Futures funded Warm Space has helped to secure lottery funding.
What could be improved?	<p>Visitor integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors like the informality of the Warm Space. They don't want to be overwhelmed with external people coming in and sitting at information tables. They want external visitors to integrate themselves, so it doesn't feel so obvious that they are using a charity. <p>Further funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding for transport, more food, staff costs for a new slot on Mondays. <p>Warm Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff require further assistance getting Warm Packs to visitors. - Initially, the flexibility of Warm Pack items was not advertised. <p>Data collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report for Clarion Futures funding can still be quite lengthy – it took the staff member a whole day to fill out, it was felt that last year was simpler. <p>Reaching isolated communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would like some support in reaching the elderly or any specialist groups. <p>Warm Pack communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initially, the flexibility of the Warm Packs was not advertised. This should be made clearer moving forward.

William Morris Big Local	
Type	Associated asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offers social support, a space to go and relax and have a cup of tea. Helps to reduce feelings of social isolation. - Runs 'time to talk': to support loneliness, social isolation etc. - Seen as a "home away from home" – somewhere to go and be comfortable. - Markets itself as a 'Community Living Room'. - People are putting in their own money to keep the space open. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space is heavily dependent on Clarion Futures funding. - The funding is used to rent space, and provide the teas, coffees, any other miscellaneous items.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The funding will also go towards volunteer-led sessions such as aromatherapy. - Funding also goes towards specific groups such as the Dementia Support group which is mainly for over 65s. - Would like to fund a first aid course for older people, as well as an IT literacy course. - Most funding goes to direct running costs and supplies e.g. heating.
<p>What is working well?</p>	<p>Clarion Futures reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does monthly reporting, which for the most part is easy to use. Staff felt that Clarion Futures asks for reasonable information. <p>Social support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors can chat about experiences of loneliness and social isolation, and current staff encourage a supportive community. Staff see the Warm Space as providing significant social benefits. Some visitors would not go anywhere if it wasn't for the space. Support for SEN teens. <p>Financial support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some visitors might experience some heating cost savings. - Visitors may also receive help with food budgeting or assistance with getting in touch with the council. - The space runs right after the food bank. This link connects people who may only go to one with the other, should they need it. <p>Clarion Housing reputation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are aware that Clarion Housing are funding the space. The advertising flyer has the Clarion Housing logo on. <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Warm Space staff are vital to the success of the space. Where staff are supportive and engaged, the spaces run well. It was suggested that more people are visiting the space because of the enthusiasm of the current staff.
<p>What could be improved?</p>	<p>Additional funding needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If they had more funding, they would want to open for a third day a week, and fund volunteer training, more ambitious community events (e.g. candle making, money for advertising, more for schools etc.) They would also want to fund advertising beyond social media. Social media is seen as helpful for engaging with volunteers, but perhaps used less among visitors. - More money would also mean further support maintaining space, current staff, and resources. - Additionally, staff would like the fire brigade and police to come in to chat to visitors about any safety concerns they may have or things to know. - Staff would like a summer market to encourage community and raise money to keep the space going. <p>Warm Pack communication</p>

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The member of staff in charge has been making contact to enquire about how to get Warm Packs, but they have not heard back. They haven't received any information about Warm Packs and haven't been getting any. The Warm Packs are viewed as being helpful to have for next year when it gets colder again. 6 people were interested in the Warm Packs, but staff expressed that it is not clear what needs to be done to obtain them. <p>Accessing new groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff find some people harder to reach as there is a language barrier on the estate. Staff are seeking support with how to cross this language barrier to reach out to this group. - Older people and those with disabilities are considered harder to reach. Despite this, staff made the effort to go into the community and knock on people's doors to reach them. <p>Visitor limit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space is limited to 25 to 30 people per session as they don't have the volunteering or staffing provisions.
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Riverside, Sutton	
Type	Community asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Warm Space takes various forms including Stay & Play and the clothing cycle. It is a Warm Space, but the activity takes centre stage. - Marketing: moved from Warm & Well to SM5 community support around September 2023. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The funding goes towards running a Stay & Play programme, funding a few members of staff for a few hours a week, snacks, hot drinks. - The combined Clarion Futures Warm Space and Clarion Futures Cost of Living funding goes towards what is termed the SM5 community, which includes the Stay & Play, takeaway hot meals, a monthly clothing cycle, dry foods (given out in the 'Take 5' programme, which happens once a month), food cupboard (with some donations), free computer access, community garden, other practical resources and activities, and running costs.
What is working well?	<p>Many benefits to programmes that the funding supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stay & Play build children's confidence and offers relief and socialising for parents. Stay & Play is free, which contrasts with some play spaces which might charge £5 per child. - The funding enables all round support, so that those in the community can access family support resources and both financial and social support.

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What could be improved?	<p>Warm Packs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough storage to take Warm Packs. - Wouldn't take a huge amount if they did have them. - Would need to think about how to distribute them. - If the opportunity came up again, the hub would be in a better place to organise Warm Pack distribution because of timing, capacity, staffing etc. <p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would appreciate a bit more support over how best to use the funding. Staff want to keep evolving the activities but seek advice on what the best way to use the money will be. It would be good to utilise Clarion Housing partnerships. - It was suggested that a bit more detailed qualitative data could be collected from the space – for example, Clarion Futures or community staff collect some detailed case studies to capture the stories of individuals using the space. - More funding would mean they could do more trips to the park etc. in Stay & Play programme. It would also mean the programmes have greater longevity and more opportunity for active and creative events and activities in general. <p>Would like to reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people better. - The centre sometimes struggles to know exactly who they reach or which groups signpost to them. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some visitors think it might be beneficial to have more activities on offer at the Stay & Play, such as story time and rhyming activities.
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Mid Sussex Voluntary Action, Burgess Hill	
Type	Community or associated asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home cooked meal, which visitors may a contribution towards. - Support with heating and food bills. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall running costs, utilities, room space, staffing costs, equipment, ingredients etc. - Staff want to keep the Warm Space going for as long as they can get funding, so funding goes towards ensuring the space stays open for as long as possible. - The Warm Space costs £200 to run every Thursday.
What is working well?	Warm Packs

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility of items was beneficial: they requested to order a panini maker, mini fridge for childcare items, and other different items instead. <p>Applying to funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Straightforward process <p>Social opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The social space is vital for older people and offers something to look forward to in the week.
What could be improved?	<p>Inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The community partner is thinking about how to make the Warm Space more inclusive with people in the local community who are struggling with food poverty etc. Currently, the space is supporting older people's social needs. - How can they support the older people while branching out to support others too. Staff want to consider intergenerational activities. <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some people felt that the meal costs were a bit steep. - More funding could mean a nicer meal that might bring more people in?

The Sutton Centre, Bradford	
Type	Community asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides a free community lunch. - Offers social opportunities. - The Warm Space session on Sundays is family friendly and helps to take some pressure off parents while allowing kids to socialise in a safe environment. - Can signpost to welfare advice and help to support people who are struggling, both emotionally and financially. - They offer financial advice surrounding food. This often comes about through discussing the ingredients used in the prepared meals. The centre encourages visitors to shop locally and emphasises the importance of the local pound in supporting their community. All the food that is served is made with local ingredients. - Other support offered can include carer support or benefits advice. - Visitors like being able to use the heating at the community centre. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The funding goes towards covering 2 staff, Sunday and Monday free meals and activities, resources, food for 20 people.
What is working well?	Supporting families:

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The centre offered a fun experience at the end of the Warm Space programme where they took the visitors to the local trampoline park. This especially supported a family with 8 kids who might not have been able to afford the trampoline park otherwise. - Sundays provide kids with a supportive and social space. <p>Financial benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the winter, there are some potential heating savings to visitors as it is a warm place to go. - In addition, visitors receive a free meal on Sunday and Monday. <p>Warm Packs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The centre was able to distribute 40 Warm Packs, which was done by referral from social workers etc. rather than purely who was interested. - The centre was able to be flexible with the items that they distributed: some people might need some items more than others etc. - Lots of the items were very popular including electric blankets, slow cookers, socks etc. - They were able to manage the storage for the Warm Packs. - The Warm Packs were very popular, and there is a waiting list for people who would like to receive a Warm Pack. - Some visitors were unaware of the Warm Packs when asked about them. This is because they were distributed on a referral basis. <p>Clarion Futures data requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data requirements were easy to fill out. They also sent a few case studies to Clarion Futures.
<p>What could be improved?</p>	<p>Clarion Housing reputation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarion Housing have a bad reputation in this community. Visitors and residents feel that their complaints fall on deaf ears, and nothing changes, even though there is a weekly housing drop-in session at the community centre. They were unaware that Clarion Housing were also funding the Warm Space. <p>Warm Pack monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many envelopes arrived self-stamped from the Rothesay Foundation – this wasn't used and was not needed, as the staff had completed the data requirements already and sent via email by scanning the documents. - For future, the Rothesay Foundation could communicate that this is what they were going to do earlier. <p>Warm Packs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future suggestions: Warm Packs for families ... items to support children etc. This may be facilitated anyway with the flexibility of the packs. If so, it will be good to communicate this better for next year. <p>Improved offerings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now that it is getting warmer for summer, families don't feel that they need the Warm Space and have commented that they feel obliged to keep coming as it supported them in the colder months.

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activities on offer could be improved so that visitors still want to attend the space in the warmer months, hence continuing to provide social support for those in the community. - One visitor noted that at the Sunday family friendly sessions, there could be more activities for kids, such as cooking, baking and arts & crafts.
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Phillimore Community Centre, Radlett – Communities 1st	
Type	Community asset
Summary	<p>Explain what the Warm Space provides/how it supports people in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space is marketed as a 'Welcome Space' or a 'Creative Community Café'. - There are approximately 5-12 visitors a week, the majority of whom are Clarion Housing residents. <p>How the funding is being used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered by grant monies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre caretaking/cleaning • Volunteer expenses • Volunteer management • Project management • Staff salary (attendance time only) • Staff expenses • Media & Comms • Activity resources/equipment • Refreshments • Sundry items & consumables (cleaning, toilet rolls, etc)
What is working well?	<p>Financial support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space can support people with energy advice, and they have ties to Cadent energy company. - While the group of visitors is currently small, those who attend can benefit from both social and financial support. <p>Community connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff can signpost to wellbeing support, which is valuable in creating connections with other groups in the community. - Visitors have received a fire safety talk, which can help their confidence and comfort in their communities. <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In February, they ran a gardening project, which attracted 12 people on top of the regular visitors.

Evaluation of Clarion Futures' Warm Spaces Programme

	<p>Social prescribing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The space gets a lot of referrals to their centre from social prescribers. This highlights that the community has some awareness of the space. <p>Clarion Housing reputation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarion Housing is viewed neutrally. To staff knowledge, they are not viewed unfavourably in the surrounding area and community. <p>Data requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff find that the reporting process for Clarion Futures is easy.
<p>What could be improved?</p>	<p>Increasing footfall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff are trying to build the attendance of the community space and increase the footfall by responding to local needs. They may require some additional assistance with this. <p>Warm Packs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff did not apply for Warm Packs. They feel that they do not have the storage space. This is frustrating for the staff because they would like to give their visitors the opportunity to receive the items. Staff feel that there would be Warm Pack uptake if there was storage. - When discussing the possibility for a system whereby Clarion Futures sends Warm Packs directly to visitors, staff suggested that some visitors may not want to give over their personal data for items to be sent direct to them. <p>Greater links to GPs and social prescribers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff want to encourage greater links between their space and visitors and GPs and social prescribers. Would Clarion Housing have connections that could help them to do this? <p>Advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff are looking to advertise in Radlett news. Some visitors feel that more advertising is needed to reach a wider audience, and that leaflets and an advert in Radlett news may help with this. There is an area nearby (aside from the surrounding Clarion Housing) where access to the Warm Space may be welcomed. <p>Activity offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors and staff noted that since covid, there has been less on at the community centre. Staff may benefit from additional support in rebuilding their community.